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STORY
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THE PAGE STORY BOOK





Yours faithfully
David Nelson Jr.

THE PAGE STORY BOOK

EDITED BY

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

AND

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ILLUSTRATED

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1914

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AT LOS ANGELES

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INTRODUCTION

IN early education no other form of literature is, on the whole, quite equal to the true story. At certain ages most children have a taste for myth, legend, and fairy tale, and some few like poetry. But every child dearly loves the true story—loves it not at any particular age, but at all times. But the story must be true—not merely nor even necessarily true to the letter, but true to life, to nature, to experience. And it must be true to the possibilities of personal experience as these are conceived by the reader or listener.

Such, in eminent degree, are the six stories by Thomas Nelson Page here presented. The heroes and heroines of these stories—and they are real heroes and heroines—are boys and girls from seven to fourteen years of age. Their wholesome thoughts and feelings, the true courage, moral as well as physical, displayed in their eventful careers, appeal strongly to the sympathy and admiration of children of like age, and scarcely less to youth and adult. Every story is instinct with moral stimulation. Courage, honesty, truth, sym-

pathy, loyalty, patriotism, and many more of the fundamental virtues are taught in the only effective way—by living, attractive example. The value of this book from the ethical standpoint can scarcely be overstated.

The stories are full of life, of action, of incident, of generous bravery, mingled with not a little pathos and with some humor. They move amid scenes and objects of perennial interest to girlhood and boyhood—horses, soldiers, and Christmas. Moreover, they are historically true, faithful, within their limits, to the real character and spirit of the place and time which they represent—the South during and immediately following the Civil War. They are not less faithful, on the other hand, to the honest spirit and purpose of those who fought for the principles of the North. In short, they are fair to both sides, in statement, temper, and tendency. Hence they are admirably adapted to put the child in the right attitude to approach the study of this period of our country's history.

It will interest the young reader to know that the author of these stories was at that time a boy of the age of his young heroes; that he lived in the midst of the kind of events which he describes so vividly; and that he has made free use of his own experiences of that period.

Mr. Page was born at Oakland Plantation,

Hanover County, Va., April 23, 1853. In the first chapter of his "Two Little Confederates" he says of his boyhood home: "It was not a handsome place, as modern ideas go, but down in Old Virginia, where the standard was different from the later one, it passed in old times as one of the best plantations in all that region. . . . It was quite secluded. It lay, it is true, right between two of the county roads, the Court-house Road being on one side, and on the other the great 'Mountain Road,' down which the large covered wagons with six horses and jingling bells used to go. . . .

"The mansion itself was known on the plantation as 'the great-house,' to distinguish it from all the other houses on the place, of which there were many. It had as many wings as the angels in the vision of Ezekiel."

The young boy's life was filled with soldiers and armies, first of the South and later of the North, as they passed along those county roads, made raids, or encamped in the vicinity.

Four of the stories in this book—*A Little Confederate Hero, Jack and Jake, Kittykin, and Nancy Pansy*—are taken from "Among the Camps," a book of young people's stories of the war, first published in 1891. The two adventures of *The Two Little Confederates* are taken from the book of the same title, published in 1888. The *Christ-*

mas Peace is from a book of stories entitled "Bred in the Bone," and published in 1904.

With the exception of the first, all these stories bear the titles given them in the original publications. Abridgment of the original stories has been necessary, however, partly for the sake of reducing them to the limits of space available, but also for the purpose of bringing them throughout within an approximately uniform range of intelligence and interest. The entire book is thus adapted to the use and enjoyment of children in the fourth and fifth school grades. This abridgment and adaptation, it is hoped, have been effected without affecting unfavorably the unity or the original import of the stories. At the same time no effort has been made to satisfy completely the interest and curiosity of the young reader. On the contrary, experience has shown that many will be stimulated to read the full story as originally told, and even other stories in the books from which these are taken.

Aside from introductory paragraphs, summarizing briefly the essential features of omitted portions, and some slight adaptations in *Nancy Pansy*, the stories are here given in the exact language of the originals.

NEWTON, MASS.

March, 1906.

F. E. S.

THE PAGE STORY BOOK

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A LITTLE CONFEDERATE HERO

I

IN the South, during the war, it became more and more difficult each year to secure new playthings and other Christmas presents for the children. Colonel Stafford, a Confederate officer, had promised his little ones some bright new presents for "next Christmas." These he procured at the first opportunity, and tied them up in a bundle, which he guarded with great care in camp, on the march, and in battle. So great was his evident anxiety for the safety of the precious bundle, the soldiers became curious to know its contents. So one evening, before the camp-fire, Colonel Stafford unwrapped the bundle and disclosed—a large doll, a tiny blue uniform and sword, and a few other things dear to childhood. As he told about his little ones, Evelyn and Charlie, Ran and Bob, there were few dry eyes among the soldiers. Not the least moved was General Denby, a stern old

Union officer held prisoner by Colonel Stafford. As he looked and listened, he thought of his own dear grandchild far away in the North. Thereafter Colonel Stafford treated the Union General with even more consideration than before.

Before Christmas came the Union army was in control of the country about Colonel Stafford's home. General Denby, the former prisoner of war, was in command of the forces encamped near the Stafford homestead.

As Christmas approached, hope waned in the Stafford family. The father could never reach them through the Union lines. So the mother, enlisting the aid of the older boys, Bob and Ran, set bravely to work to supply the presents which Evelyn and Charlie had looked forward to all the year. She made a gray uniform for Charlie out of an old army coat of her husband's, while the boys made a tin sword and whittled out a wooden doll.

But Christmas eve, true to his word, Colonel Stafford appeared, bringing his precious bundle of Christmas things. He had passed through the enemy's lines disguised as a pedler.

II

When the pack was opened, such a treasure-house of toys and things was displayed as surely



Colonel Stafford unwrapped the bundle and disclosed a large doll, a tiny blue uniform and sword.



never greeted any other eyes. The smaller children, including Ran, were not awaked, at their father's request, though Mrs. Stafford wished to wake them to see him; but Bob was let into the secrets, except that he was not permitted to see a small package which bore his name. Mrs. Stafford and the Colonel were like two children themselves as they "tipped" about stuffing the long stockings with candy and toys of all kinds. The beautiful doll with flaxen hair, all arrayed in silk and lace, was seated, last of all, securely on top of Evelyn's stocking, with her wardrobe just below her, where she would greet her young mistress when she should first open her eyes; and Charlie's little blue uniform was pinned beside the gray one his mother had made, with his sword buckled around the waist.

Bob was at last dismissed to his room, and the Colonel and Mrs. Stafford settled themselves before the fire, hand in hand, to talk over all the past. They had hardly started, when Bob rushed down the stairs and dashed into their room.

"Papa! papa! the yard's full of Yankees!"

Both the Colonel and Mrs. Stafford sprang to their feet.

"Through the back door!" cried Mrs. Stafford, seizing her husband.

"He cannot get out that way—they are everywhere; I saw them from my window!" gasped

Bob, just as the sound of trampling without became audible.

"Oh, what will you do? Those clothes! If they catch you in those clothes!" began Mrs. Stafford, and then stopped, her face growing ashy pale. Bob also turned even whiter than he had been before. He remembered the young man who was found in citizen's clothes in the autumn, and knew his dreadful fate. He burst out crying. "Oh, papa! will they hang you?" he sobbed.

"I hope not, my son," said the Colonel gravely. "Certainly not, if I can prevent it." A gleam of amusement stole into his eyes. "It's an awkward fix, certainly," he added.

"You must conceal yourself!" cried Mrs. Stafford, as a number of footsteps sounded on the porch, and a thundering knock shook the door. "Come here!" She pulled him almost by main force into a closet or entry, and locked the door, just as the knocking was renewed. As the door was apparently about to be broken down, she went out into the hall. Her face was deadly white, and her lips were moving in prayer.

"Who's there?" she called tremblingly, trying to gain time.

"Open the door immediately, or it will be broken down," replied a stern voice.

She turned the great iron key in the heavy old

brass lock, and a dozen men rushed into the hall. They all waited for one, a tall elderly man in a general's fatigue uniform, and with a stern face and a grizzled beard. He addressed her:

"Madam, I have come to take possession of this house as my headquarters."

Mrs. Stafford bowed, unable to speak. She was sensible of a feeling of relief; there was a gleam of hope. If they did not know of her husband's presence— But the next word destroyed it.

"We have not interfered with you up to the present time, but you have been harboring a spy here, and he is here now."

"There is no spy here, and has never been," said Mrs. Stafford with dignity; "but if there were, you should not know it from me." She spoke with much spirit. "It is not the custom of our people to deliver up those who have sought their protection."

The officer removed his hat. His keen eye was fixed on her white face. "We shall search the premises," he said sternly, but more respectfully than he had yet spoken. "Major, have the house thoroughly searched."

The men went striding off, opening doors and looking through the rooms. The General took a turn up and down the hall. He walked up to a door.

"That is my chamber," said Mrs. Stafford quickly.

The officer fell back. "It must be searched," he said.

"My little children are asleep in there," said Mrs. Stafford, her face quite white.

"It must be searched," repeated the General. "Either they must do it, or I. You can take your choice."

Mrs. Stafford made a gesture of assent. He opened the door and stepped across the threshold. There he stopped. His eye took in the scene. Charlie was lying in the little trundle-bed in the corner, calm and peaceful, and by his side was Evelyn, her little face looking like a flower lying in the tangle of golden hair which fell over her pillow. The noise disturbed her slightly, for she smiled suddenly, and muttered something about "Santa Tlaus" and a "dolly." The officer's gaze swept the room, and fell on the overcrowded stockings hanging from the mantel. He advanced to the fireplace and examined the doll and trousers closely. With a curious expression on his face, he turned and walked out of the room, closing the door softly behind him.

"Major," he said to the officer in charge of the searching party, who descended the steps just then, "take the men back to camp, except the sentinels. There is no spy here."

In a moment Mrs. Stafford came out of her chamber. The old officer was walking up and down in deep thought. Suddenly he turned to her :

"Madam, be so kind as to go and tell Colonel Stafford that General Denby desires him to surrender himself."

Mrs. Stafford was struck dumb. She was unable to move or to articulate.

"I shall wait for him," said the General quietly, throwing himself into an arm-chair and looking steadily into the fire.

III

As his father concealed himself, Bob had left the chamber. He was in a perfect agony of mind. He knew that his father could not escape, and if he were found dressed in citizen's clothes he felt that he could have but one fate. All sorts of schemes entered his boy's head to save him. Suddenly he thought of the small group of prisoners he had seen pass by about dark. He would save him! Putting on his hat, he opened the front door and walked out. A sentinel accosted him surlily to know where he was going. Bob invited him in to get warm, and soon had him engaged in conversation.

"What do you do with your prisoners when you catch them?" inquired Bob.

"Send some on to prison—and hang some."

"I mean when you first catch them."

"Oh, they stay in camp. We don't treat 'em bad, without they be spies. There's a batch at camp now, got in this evening—sort o' Christmas gift." The soldier laughed as he stamped his feet to keep warm.

"Where's your camp?" Bob asked.

"About a mile from here, right on the road, or rather right on the hill at the edge of the pines 'yond the crick."

The boy left his companion, and sauntered in and out among the other men in the yard. Presently he moved on to the edge of the lawn beyond them. No one took further notice of him. In a second he had slipped through the gate, and was flying across the field. He knew every foot of ground as well as a hare, for he had been hunting and setting traps over it since he was as big as little Charlie. He had to make a detour at the creek to avoid the picket, and the dense briars were very bad and painful. However, he worked his way through, though his face was severely scratched. Into the creek he plunged. "Ouch!" He had stepped into a hole, and the water was as cold as ice. However, he was through, and at the top of the hill he could see the glow of the camp-fires lighting up the sky.

He crept cautiously up, and saw the dark forms

of the sentinels pacing backward and forward wrapped in their overcoats, now lit up by the fire, then growing black against its blazing embers, then lit up again, and passing away into the shadow. How could he ever get by them? His heart began to beat and his teeth to chatter, but he walked boldly up.

"Halt! who goes there?" cried the sentry, bringing his gun down and advancing on him.

Bob kept on, and the sentinel, finding that it was only a boy, looked rather sheepish.

"Don't let him capture you, Jim," called one of them. "Call the Corporal of the Guard," another. "Order up the reserves," a third, and so on. Bob had to undergo something of an examination.

"I know the little Johnny," said one of them. They made him draw up to the fire, and made quite a fuss over him. Bob had his wits about him, and soon learned that a batch of prisoners were at a fire a hundred yards farther back. He therefore worked his way over there, although he was advised to stay where he was and get dry, and had many offers of a bunk from his new friends, some of whom followed him over to where the prisoners were.

Most of them were quartered for the night in a hut before which a guard was stationed. One or

two, however, sat around the camp-fire, chatting with their guards. Among them was a major in full uniform. Bob singled him out; he was just about his father's size.

He was instantly the centre of attraction. Again he told them he was from Holly Hill; again he was recognized by one of the men.

"Run away to join the army?" asked one.

"No," said Bob, his eyes flashing at the suggestion.

"Lost?"

"No."

"Mother whipped you?"

"No."

As soon as their curiosity had somewhat subsided, Bob, who had hardly been able to contain himself, said to the Confederate major in a low undertone:

"My father, Colonel Stafford, is at home, concealed, and the Yankees have taken possession of the house."

"Well?" said the major, looking down at him as if casually.

"He cannot escape, and he has on citizen's clothes, and—" Bob's voice choked suddenly as he gazed at the major's uniform.

"Well?" The prisoner for a second looked sharply down at the boy's earnest face. Then he put his hand under his chin, and lifting it, looked

into his eyes. Bob shivered, and a sob escaped him.

The major placed his hand firmly on his knee. "Why, you are wringing wet," he said aloud. "I wonder you are not frozen to death." He rose and stripped off his coat. "Here, get into this;" and before the boy knew it, the major had bundled him into his coat, and rolled up the sleeves so that Bob could use his hands. The action attracted the attention of the rest of the group, and several of the Yankees offered to take the boy and give him dry clothes.

"No, sir," laughed the major; "this boy is a rebel. Do you think he will wear one of your Yankee suits? He's a little major, and I'm going to give him a major's uniform."

In a minute he had stripped off his trousers, and was helping Bob into them, standing himself in his underclothes in the icy air. The legs were three times too long for the boy, and the waist came up to his armpits.

"Now go home to your mother," said the major, laughing at his appearance; "and some of you fellows get me some clothes, or a blanket. I'll wear your Yankee uniform out of sheer necessity."

Bob trotted around, keeping as far away from the light of the camp-fires as possible. He soon found himself unobserved, and reached the

shadow of a line of huts, and keeping well in it, he came to the edge of the camp. He watched his opportunity, and when the sentry's back was turned slipped out into the darkness. In an instant he was flying down the hill. The heavy clothes impeded him, and he stopped only long enough to snatch them off and roll them into a bundle, and sped on his way again. He struck the main road, and was running down the hill as fast as his legs could carry him, when he suddenly found himself almost on a group of dark objects who were standing in the road just in front of him. One of them moved. It was the picket. Bob suddenly stopped. His heart was in his throat.

"Who goes there?" said a stern voice.

Bob's heart beat as if it would spring out of his body.

"Come in; we have you," said the man, advancing.

Bob sprang across the ditch beside the road, and putting his hand on the top rail of the fence, flung himself over it, bundle and all, flat on the other side, just as a blaze of light burst from the picket, and the report of a carbine startled the silent night. The bullet grazed the boy's arm and crashed through the rail. In a second Bob was on his feet. The picket was almost on him. Seizing his bundle, he dived into the thicket as a

half-dozen shots were sent ringing after him, the bullets hissing and whistling over his head. Several men dashed into the woods after him in hot pursuit, and a couple more galloped up the road to intercept him; but Bob's feet were winged, and he slipped through briars and brush like a scared hare. They scratched his face and threw him down, but he was up again. Now and then a shot crashed behind him, but he did not care for that; he thought only of being caught.

A few hundred yards up, he plunged into the stream, and wading across, was soon safe from his pursuers. Breathless, he climbed the hill, made his way through the woods, and emerged into the open fields. Across these he sped like a deer. He had almost given out. What if they should have caught his father, and he should be too late! A sob escaped him at the bare thought, and he broke again into a run, wiping off with his sleeve the tears that would come. The wind cut him like a knife, but he did not mind that.

As he neared the house he feared that he might be intercepted again and the clothes taken from him, so he stopped for a moment, and slipped them on once more, rolling up the sleeves and legs as well as he could. He crossed the yard undisturbed. He went around to the same door by which he had come out, for he thought this his best chance. The same sentinel was there, walk-

ing up and down, blowing his cold hands. Had his father been arrested? Bob's teeth chattered, but it was with suppressed excitement.

"Pretty cold," said the sentry.

"Ye-es," gasped Bob.

"Your mother's been out here looking for you, I guess," said the soldier, with much friendliness.

"I rec-reckon so," panted Bob, moving toward the door. Did that mean that his father was caught? He opened the door, and slipped quietly into the corridor.

General Denby still sat silent before the hall fire. Bob listened at the chamber door. His mother was weeping; his father stood calm and resolute before the fire. He had determined to give himself up.

"If you only did not have on those clothes!" sobbed Mrs. Stafford. "If I only had not cut up the old uniform for the children!"

"Mother, mother, I have one!" gasped Bob, bursting into the room and tearing off the unknown major's uniform.

Ten minutes later, Colonel Stafford, with a steady step and a proud carriage, and with his hand resting on Bob's shoulder, walked out into the hall. He was dressed in the uniform of a Confederate major, which fitted admirably his tall, erect figure.

"General Denby, I believe," he said, as the

Union officer rose and faced him. "We have met before under somewhat different circumstances," he said, with a bow, "for I now find myself your prisoner."

"I have the honor to request your parole," said the General, with great politeness, "and to express the hope that I may be able in some way to return the courtesy which I formerly received at your hands." He extended his hand, and Colonel Stafford took it.

"You have my parole," said he.

"I was not aware," said the General, with a bow toward Mrs. Stafford, "until I entered the room where your children were sleeping, that I had the honor of your husband's acquaintance. I will now take my leave and return to camp, that I may not by my presence interfere with the joy of this season."

"I desire to introduce to you my son," said Colonel Stafford, proudly presenting Bob. "He is a hero."

The General bowed as he shook hands with him. Perhaps he had some suspicion how true a hero he was, for he rested his hand kindly on the boy's head, but he said nothing.

Both Colonel and Mrs. Stafford invited the old soldier to spend the night there, but he declined. He, however, accepted an invitation to dine with them next day.

Before leaving, he requested permission to take one more look at the sleeping children. Over Evelyn he bent silently. Suddenly stooping, he kissed her little pink cheek, and with a scarcely audible "Good-night," passed out of the room and left the house.

“JACK AND JAKE.”

I

“JACK AND JAKE.” This is what they used to be called. Their names were always coupled together. Wherever you saw one, you were very apt to see the other—Jack, slender, with yellow hair, big gray eyes, and spirited look; and Jake, thick-set and brown, close to him, like his shadow, with his shining skin and white teeth. They were always in sight somewhere; it might be running about the yard or far down on the plantation, or it might be climbing trees to look into birds’ nests—which they were forbidden to trouble—or wading in the creek, riding in the carts or wagons about the fields, or following the furrow, waiting a chance to ride a plough-horse home.

Jake belonged to Jack. He had been given to him by his old master, Jack’s grandfather, when Jack was only a few years old, and from that time the two boys were rarely separated, except at night.

Jake was a little larger than Jack, as he was somewhat older, but Jack was the more active.

Jake was dull; some people on the plantation said he did not have good sense; but they rarely ventured to say so twice to Jack. Jack said he had more sense than any man on the place. At least, he idolized Jack.

At times the people commented on the white boy being so much with the black; but Jack's father said it was as natural for them to run together as for two calves—a black one and a white one—when they were turned out together; that he had played with Uncle Ralph, the butler, when they were boys, and had taught the latter as much badness as he had him.

So the two boys grew up together as "Jack and Jake," forming a friendship which prevented either of them ever knowing that Jake was a slave, and brought them up as friends rather than as master and servant.

If there was any difference, the boys thought it was rather in favor of Jake; for Jack had to go to school, and sit for some hours every morning "saying lessons" to his aunt, and had to look out (sometimes) for his clothes, while Jake just lounged around outside the school-room door, and could do as he pleased, for he was sure to get Jack's suit as soon as it had become too much worn for Jack.

The games they used to play were surprising. Jack always knew of some interesting thing they

could "make 'tence" (that is, pretence) that they were doing. They could be fishers and trappers, of course; for there was the creek winding down the meadow, in and out among the heavy willows on its banks; and in the holes under the fences and by the shelving rocks, where the water was blue and deep, there were shining minnows, and even little perch; and they could be lost on rafts, for there was the pond, and with their trousers rolled up to their thighs they could get on planks and pole themselves about.

But the best fun of all was "Injins." Goodness! how much fun there was in Injins! There were bows and arrows, and tomahawks, and wigwams, and fires in the woods, and painted faces, and creeping-ups, and scalpings, and stealing horses, and hot pursuits, and hidings, and captures, and bringing the horses back, and the full revenge and triumph that are dear to boys' hearts. Injins was, of all plays, the best. There was a dear old wonderful fellow named Leatherstocking, who was the greatest "Injin"-hunter in the world. Jack knew all about him. He had a book with him in it, and he read it and told Jake; and so they played Injins whenever they wanted real fun. It was a beautiful place for Injins; the hills rolled, the creeks wound in and out among the willows, and ran through thickets into the little river, and the woods surrounded the plantation

on all sides, and stretched across the river to the Mont Air place, so that the boys could cross over and play on the other side of the thick woods.

When the war came, Jack was almost a big boy. He thought he was quite one. He was ten years old, and grew old two years at a time. His father went off with the army, and left his mother at home to take care of the plantation and the children. That included Ancy and wee Martha; not Jack, of course. So far from leaving any one to take care of Jack, he left Jack to take care of his mother. The morning he went away he called Jack to him and had a talk with him. He told him he wanted him to mind his mother, and look out for her, to help her and save her trouble, to take care of her and comfort her, and defend her always like a man. Jack was standing right in front of him, and when the talk began he was fidgety, because he was in a great hurry to go to the stable and ride his father's horse Warrior to the house; but his father had never talked to him so before, and as he proceeded, Jack became grave, and when his father took his hand, and, looking him quietly in the eyes, said, "Will you, my son?" he burst out crying, and flung his arms around his father's neck, and said, "Yes, father, I will."

He did not go out of the house any more then; he left the horse to be brought down by Uncle

Henry, the carriage-driver, and he sat quietly by his father, and kept his eyes on him, getting him anything he wanted; and he waited on his mother; and when his father went away, he kissed him, and said all over again that he would do what he promised. And when his mother locked herself in her room afterward, Jack sat on the front porch alone, in his father's chair, and waited. And when she came out on the porch, with her eyes red from weeping and her face worn, he did not say anything, but quietly went and got her a glass of water. His father's talk had aged him.

For the first two years the war did not make much difference to Jack personally. It made a difference to the country, and to the people, and to his mother, but not to Jack individually, though it made a marked difference in him. It made him older. His father's words never were forgotten. They had sobered him and steadied him. He had seen a great deal of the war. The troop trains passed up the railroad, the soldiers cheering and shouting, filling the cars and crowding on top of them; the army, or parts of it, marched through the country by the county roads, camping in the woods and fields. Many soldiers stopped at Jack's home, where open house was kept, and everything was gladly given to them. All the visitors now were soldiers. Jack rode the gentle-

men's horses to water, with Jake behind him, if there was but one (in which case the horse was apt to get several waterings), or galloping after him, if there were more. They were hard riders, and got many falls, for the young officers were usually well mounted, and their horses were wild. But a fall was no disgrace. Jack remembered that his father once said to him, when a colt had thrown him, "All bold riders get falls; only those do not who ride tame horses."

All the visitors were in uniform; all the talk was of war; all thoughts were of the Confederacy. Every one was enthusiastic. No sacrifices were too great to be made. The corn-houses were emptied into the great, covered, blue army wagons; the pick of the horses and mules was given up. Provisions became scanty and the food plain; coffee and tea disappeared; clothes that were worn out were replaced by homespun. Jack dressed in the same sort of coarse, grayish stuff of which Jake's clothes used to be made; and his boots were made by Uncle Dick at the quarters; but this did not trouble him. It was rather fun than otherwise. Boys like to rough it. He had come to care little for these things. He was getting manlier. His mother called him her protector; his father, when he came home—as he did once or twice a year—called him "a man," and introduced him to his friends as "my son."

His mother began to consult him, to rely on him, to call on him. He used to go about with her, or go for her wherever she had business, however far off it might be.

The war had been going on two years, when the enemy first reached Jack's home. It was a great shock to Jack, for he had never doubted that the Confederates would keep them back. There had been a great battle some time before, and his father had been wounded and taken prisoner (at first he was reported killed). But for that, Jack said, the "Yankees" would never have got there. The Union troops did not trouble Jack personally, but they made a great deal of trouble about the place. They took all the horses and mules that were good for anything and put them in their wagons. This was a terrible blow to Jack. All his life he had been brought up with the horses; each one was his pet or his friend.

After that the war seemed to be much more about Jack's home than it had been before. The place was in the possession first of one army and then of the other, and at last, one winter, the two armies lay not far apart, with Jack's home just between them. "The Yankees" were the nearer. Their pickets were actually on the plantation, at the ford, and at the bridge over the little river into which the creek emptied, in the big woods. There they lay, with their camps over behind the

hills, a mile or two farther away. At night the glow of their camp-fires could be seen. Jack had a pretty aunt who used to stay with his mother, and many young officers used to come over from the Confederate side to see her. In such cases they usually came at night, leaving their horses, for scouting parties used to come in on them occasionally and stir them up. Once or twice skirmishes took place in the fields beyond the creek.

One evening a party of young officers came in and took supper. They had some great plan. They were quite mysterious, and consulted with Jack's mother, who was greatly interested in them. They appeared a little shy of talking before Jack; but when his mother said he had so much judgment that he could be trusted, they talked openly in his presence. They had a plan to go into the Federal camp that night and seize the commanding officer. They wanted to know all the paths. Jack could tell them. He was so proud. There was not a cow-path he did not know for two or three miles around, for he and Jake had hunted all over the country. He could tell them everything, and he did so with a swelling heart. They laid sheets of paper down on the dining-table, and he drew them plans of the roads and hills and big woods; showed where the river could be waded, and where the ravines



He drew them plans of the roads and hills and big woods.

were. He asked his mother to let him go along with them, but she thought it best for him not to go.

They set out at bedtime on foot, a half-dozen gay young fellows, laughing and boasting of what they would do, and Jack watched them enviously as their forms faded away in the night. They did not succeed in capturing the officer, but they captured a number of horses and a picket at the bridge, and came off triumphant, with only one or two of their number slightly wounded. Shortly afterward they came over, and had a great time telling their experiences. They had used the map Jack made for them, and had got safely beyond the pickets and reached the camp. There, finding the sentries on guard, they turned back, and taking the road, marched down on the picket as if they had come to relieve them. Coming from the camp in this way, they had got upon the picket, when, suddenly drawing their pistols and poking them up against the Yankees, they forced them to surrender, and disarmed them. Then taking two of them off separately, they compelled them to give the countersign. Having got this, they left the prisoners under guard of two of their number, and the rest went back to camp. With the countersign they passed the sentry, and went into the camp. Then they found that the commanding officer had gone off somewhere, and was

not in camp that night, and there were so many men stirring about that they did not dare to wait. They determined, therefore, to capture some horses and return. They were looking over the lines of horses to take their pick when they were discovered. Each man had selected a horse and was trying to get him, when the alarm was given, and they were fired on. They had only time to cut the halters when the camp began to pour out. Flinging themselves on the horses' backs, they dashed out under a fusillade, firing right and left. They took to the road, but it had been picketed, and they had to dash through the men who held it under a fire poured into their faces. All had passed safely except one, whose horse had become unmanageable and had run away, flying the track and taking to the fields.

He was, they agreed, the finest horse in the lot, and his rider had had great trouble getting him, and had lingered so long that he came near being captured. He had finally cut the halter, and had cut it too short to hold by.

They had great fun laughing at their comrade, and the figure he cut as his barebacked horse dashed off into the darkness, with him swinging to the mane. He had shortly been dragged off of him in the woods, and when he appeared in camp, next day, he looked as if he had been run through a mill. His eyes were nearly scratched

out of his head, and his uniform was torn into shreds.

The young fellow, who still showed the marks of his bruising, took the chaffing good-naturedly, and confessed that he had nearly lost his life trying to hold on to his captive. He had been down into the woods the next day to try and get his horse, though it was the other side of the little river, and really within the Federal lines. But though he caught sight of him, it was only a glimpse. The animal was much too wild to be caught, and the only thing he received for his pains was a grazing shot from a picket, who had caught sight of him prowling around, and had sent a ball through his cap.

II

Jack, full of excitement over the story of the young soldiers, determined to capture the wild horse himself. Of course, he took Jake into his plans. Next day, armed with musket, axe, rope, and provided with corn, they set out for the woods where they supposed the horse to be.

The river had to be crossed, and the only bridge and the ford were picketed by the Yankees. Jack could swim but little, and Jake not a stroke. At length they found a tree which had fallen into the water, but had fallen just short of bridging

the deepest part of the river next to the opposite bank. The boys completed the bridge with poles, so that, with care, they were able to "coo it" across—that is, crawl over on hands and knees.

The boys caught a glimpse of the horse galloping through the forest. They also found the place where he was apparently accustomed to feed, a damp, grassy spot in a ravine. Here was a deep gully, with sheer banks on either side, and coming together in front. At the one entrance to this gully the boys set poles in such a way that the horse could crowd between them, springing them apart; but once through, they would close behind him and prevent his escape. This trap they baited bountifully with corn.

The boys had some difficulty in keeping their secret. Jack had smilingly told his mother, on being questioned, that they were "setting traps" in the woods.

After three or four days, the trap having failed to work the first time, the boys were rewarded to find the horse a captive. He was a dangerous animal, rearing and jumping in his efforts to get free. It was unsafe to go inside the trap to bridle him. Finally Jack succeeded in lassoing him, and thus subduing him so that he was able to get the bridle on his head. But he was still too wild to take out, and it was late. So the boys left him there in the trap.

The next afternoon the boys set out, determined this time to bring their captive home. They did not go until late, for it would be easier to pass the pickets on the road to the river in the dark than in the daylight. But when they came to their trap, it was empty! The horse had not broken out, but had been taken away by some one. The poles were thrown away, and there were men's tracks all about.

Jack soon discovered the horse's tracks leading straight toward the clearing where the picket was. With Jake following, he crept to the very edge of the opening, where he counted five men and six horses. One horse must be his. Jack crept closer, until he could plainly hear the men talking about the valuable horse which they had captured. It was suggested that they should play cards for the horse, the winner to have the whole of him. So they began their play in the moonlight.

Jack could now make out his horse standing tied near the cabin, on the outside of the others. He could see, in the moonlight, that he was tied with a rope. He crept back to Jake, and together they went farther down into the woods to consult. Jack had a plan, which he unfolded to Jake, but Jake was obdurate. "Nor, sah, he warn' gwine 'mong dem Yankees. Yankees ketch him and shoot him. He was gwine home. Mammy'd

whup him if he didn'; she mought whup him anyway." Jack pleaded and promised, but it was useless. He explained to Jake that they could ride home quicker than they could walk. It was of no avail. Jake recalled that there was a Yankee picket near the bridge, and that was the only place a horse could cross since the ford was stopped up. Finally Jack had to let Jake go.

He told him not to say anything at home as to where he was, which Jake promised, and Jack helped him across the poles at the tree, and then went back alone to the clearing. He crept up as before. The men were still playing cards, and he could hear them swearing and laughing over their ill or good luck. One of them looked at his watch. The relief would be along in twenty minutes. Jack's heart beat. He had no time to lose. He cut himself a stout switch. He made a little detour, and went around the other side of the clearing, so as to get the horse between him and the men. This put him on the side toward the camp, as the men were on the path which led to the bridge. Without stopping, he crept up to the open space. Then he flung himself on his face, and began to crawl up through the weeds toward the horses, stopping every now and then to listen to the men. As he drew near, one or two of the horses got alarmed and began to twist, and one of them gave a snort of fear. Jack heard

the men discussing it, and one of them say he would go and see what was the matter. Jack lay flat in the weeds, and his heart almost stopped with fright as he heard the man coming around the house. He could see him through the weeds, and he had his gun in his hands. He seemed to be coming right to Jack, and he gave himself up as lost. He could hear his heart thumping so, he was sure the man must hear it too. He would have sprung up and cut for the woods, if he had had the slightest chance, and as it was, he came near giving himself up; but though the man seemed to be looking right toward him, Jack was fortunately so concealed by the weeds that he did not observe him. He went up to Jack's horse and examined the rope. "Tain't nothing but this new horse," he called out to his comrades. "He just wanted to see his master. I'll put my saddle on him now, boys. I've got him so certain, and I mean to let him know he's got a master." He changed the saddle and bridle from another horse to that, and then went back to his comrades, who were all calling to him to come along, and were accusing him of trying to take up the time until the relief came, because he was ahead, and did not want to play more and give them a chance to win the horse back.

Jack lay still for a minute, and then took a peep at the men, who were all busily playing.

Then he crept up. As soon as he was out of sight, he sprang to his feet and walked boldly up to the horse, caught him by the bit, and with a stroke of his knife cut the rope almost in two close up to his head. Then he climbed up on him, gathered up the reins, fixed his feet in the stirrup leathers, bent over, and with a single stroke cut the rope and turned him toward the bridge. The horse began to rear and jump. Jack heard the men stop talking, and one of them say, "That horse is loose!" Another one said, "I'll go and see." Another said, "There's the relief." Jack looked over his shoulder. There came a half-dozen men on horses. There was no time to lose. Lifting his switch above his head, Jack struck the horse a lick with all his might, and, with a bound which nearly threw Jack out of his seat, he dashed out into the moonlight straight for the road. "He's loose! there's a man on him!" shouted the men, springing to their feet. Jack leaned forward on his neck and gave him the switch just as a volley was fired at him. Pop, pop, pop, pop went the pistols, and the balls flew whistling about Jack's head; but he was leaning far forward, and was untouched. Under the lash the horse went flying down the path across the little field.

Jack had often run races on colts, but he had never ridden such a race as that. The wind blew

whistling by him; the leaves of the bushes over the path cut him, hissing as he dashed along. If he could pass the picket where the path struck the road near the bridge, he would be safe. The path was on an incline near the road, and was on a straight line with the bridge, so he had a straight dash for it. The picket was just beyond the fork. Jack had often seen them. There were generally two men on the bridge, and a pole was laid across the railing of the bridge near the other side. But Jack did not think of that now; he thought only of the men galloping behind him on his track. He could not have stopped the horse if he would, but he had no idea of trying it. He was near the bridge, and his only chance was to dash by the picket. Down the path he went as straight as an arrow, his splendid horse leaping under his light weight—down the path like a bullet through the dusk of the woods. The sleepy picket had heard the firing at the clearing up on the hill, and had got ready to stop whomever it might be. They were standing in the road, with their guns ready. They could not make it out. It was only a single horse coming tearing down toward them.

“Halt! halt!” they called, before Jack was in sight; but it was idle. Down the path the horse came flying—Jack with his feet in the stirrup leathers, his hands wrapped in the bridle reins, his body bent forward on his horse’s neck, and

clucking his tongue out. In one bound the horse was in the road. "Halt!" Bang! bang! went the guns in his very face. But he was flying. A dozen leaps, and he was thundering across the bridge. Jack was conscious only that a dark form stood in the middle, throwing up its arms. It was but a second; he saw it shot out into the water as if struck by a steam-engine. His horse gave one splendid leap, and the next minute he was tearing up the road toward home, through the quiet woods, which gave no sound but that of his rushing stride.

Jack had one moment of supreme delight. His mother had got somewhat anxious about him, and they were all on the front porch when he galloped up into the yard, his beautiful bay now brought down under perfect control, but yet full of life and spirit. As they ran to meet him, Jack sprang from the saddle and presented the horse to his mother.

III

The next day Jack's mother called him into her room. She took him by the hand. "My son," she said, "I want you to carry the horse back and return him to the Yankee camp."

Jack was aghast. "Why, mamma, he's my horse; that is, he is yours. I found him, and caught him and gave him to you."

His mother explained to him her reasons. She did not think it was right for him to keep the horse obtained in such a way. Jack argued that he had found the horse running wild in their own woods, and did not know his owner. This made no difference; she told him the horse had an owner. He argued that the soldiers took horses, had taken all of theirs, and that their own soldiers—the gentlemen who had come to tea—had been over and taken a lot from the camp. His mother explained to him that that was different. They were all soldiers wearing uniforms, engaged openly in war. What they took was capture; Jack was not a soldier, and was not treated as one. Jack told her how he had been shot at and chased. She was firm. She wished the horse returned, and though Jack wept a little, for the joint reason of having to give up the horse and the mortification of restoring it to the Yankees, he obeyed. He had some doubt whether he would not be captured; but his mother said she would write a letter to the commanding officer over there, explaining why she returned the horse, and this would be safe-conduct. She had known the Colonel before the war, and he had once stopped at her house after a little battle beyond them. Colonel Wilson had, in fact, once been a lover of hers.

The idea of going with a safe-conduct was

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rather soothing to Jack's feelings; it sounded like a man. So he went and fed the horse. Then he went and asked Jake to go with him. Jake was very doubtful. He was afraid of the Yankees catching him. The glory of Jack's capture the night before had, however, given Jack great prestige, and when Jack told him about the letter his mother was going to write as a safe-conduct—like a "pass," he explained—Jake agreed to go, but only on condition that he might carry the pass. To this Jack consented. It was late in the afternoon when they started, for the horse had to be broken to carry double, and he was very lively. Both Jack and Jake went off again and again. At last, however, they got him steady, and set out, Jack in the saddle, and Jake behind him clinging on. Jake had the letter safe in his pocket for their protection. They had a beautiful ride through the woods, and Jack remembered the glorious race he had had there the night before. As they approached the bridge, Jack thought of tying his handkerchief on a stick as a flag of truce; but he was not sure, as he was not a real soldier, he ought to do so. He therefore rode slowly on. He pictured to himself the surprise the men would have when he rode up, and they recognized the horse, and learned that he had captured it.

This feeling almost did away with the mortifi-

cation of having to return it. He rode slowly as he neared the bridge, for he did not want them to think he was a soldier and shoot at him. Jack was surprised when he got to the bridge to find no men there. He rode across, and not caring to keep up the main road, turned up the path toward the clearing. He rode cautiously. His horse suddenly shied, and Jack was startled by some one springing out of the bushes before him and calling "Halt!" as he flung up his gun. Jake clutched him, and Jack halted. Several men surrounded them, and ordered them to get down. They slipped off the horse, and one of the men took it. They all had guns.

"Why, this is the Colonel's thoroughbred, that was stolen two weeks ago!" declared one of the men. "Where did you steal this horse?" asked another of them roughly.

"We did not steal him," asserted Jack hotly. "We found him, and caught him in the woods."

"You hear that?" The man turned to his comrades. "Come, little Johnnie, don't tell lies. We've got you, and you were riding a stolen horse, and there were several others stolen at the same time. You'd better tell the truth, and make a clean breast of it, if you know what's good for you."

Jack indignantly denied that he had stolen the

horse, and told how they had caught him and were bringing him back. He had a letter from his mother to Colonel Wilson, he asserted, to prove it.

"Where is the letter?" they asked.

Jack turned to Jake. "Jake's got it in his pocket."

"Yes, I got de pass," declared Jake, feeling in his pocket. He felt first in one, and then in another. His countenance fell. "Hi! I done los' it," he asserted.

The soldiers laughed. That was a little too thin, they declared. Come, they must go with them. They proposed to put a stop to this horse-stealing. It had been going on long enough. A horse was stolen only last night, and the man had run over one of the pickets on the bridge, and had knocked him into the river and drowned him. They were glad to find who it was.

Jack felt very bad. Jake came close up to him and began to whisper. "Jack, what dey gwine do wid us?" he asked.

"Hang you, you black little horse-stealing imp!" said one of the men with a terrific force. "Cut you up into little pieces!"

The others laughed. Men are often not very considerate to children. They do not realize how helpless children feel in their power. Both Jack and Jake turned pale.

Jake was ashy. "Jack, I tolè you not to come!" he cried.

Jack acknowledged the truth of this. He had it on his tongue's end to say, "What did you lose the letter for?" but he did not. He felt that as his father's son he must be brave. He just walked close to Jake and touched him. "Don't be scared," he whispered. "We will get away."

Just then one of the men caught Jake and twisted his arm a little. Jake gave a little whine of fright. In an instant Jack snatched a gun from a man near by him, and cocking it, levelled it at the soldier. "Let Jake go, or I'll blow your brains out!" he said.

A hand seized him from behind, and the gun was jerked out of his hand. It went off, but the bullet flew over their heads. There was no more twisting of Jake's arm, however. The soldiers, after this, made them march along between them. They carried them to the clearing where the old house was, and where some of their comrades were on guard awaiting them. They marched the boys up to the fire. "We've got the little horse-thieves," they declared. "They were coming over after another horse; but I guess we'll break it up now."

"Why, they are mighty little fellows to be horse-thieves," said one.

"They are the worst kind," declared the other.

"Must be right bad, then, corporal, for you are pretty handy yourself," declared a comrade.

"We are not any horse-thieves," asserted Jack.
"We found this horse."

"Shut up!" ordered one of his captors. They began to talk about what they would do with them. Several methods of securing them were proposed, and it was finally determined to lock them up in the loft of the old cabin till morning, when they would carry them to camp, and the Colonel would make proper disposition of them.

"Can't they get away in there?" asked one man.

"No; there is a bolt on the outside of the door," said another. "Besides, we are all down here."

They were accordingly taken and carried into the house and up the rickety old stairs to the loft, where they were left on the bare floor with a single blanket. It was quite dark in there, and Jack felt very low down as he heard the bolt pushed into the staple on the outside. Jake was crying, and Jack could not help sobbing a little himself. He had, however, to comfort Jake, so he soon stopped, and applied himself to this work. The only comfort Jake took was in his assurance that he would get him out.

"How you gwine do it?" asked Jake.

"Never mind, I'll do it," declared Jack, though

he had no idea how he was to make good his word. He had taken good notice of the outside of the cabin, and now he began to examine the inside. As his eyes became accustomed to the darkness, he could see better, and as they were barefooted, they could walk about without any noise. The old roof was full of holes, and they could see the sky grow white with the rising moon. There was an old window in one end of the loft. There were holes in the side, and looking out, Jack could see the men sitting about, and hear their voices. Jack tried the window; it was nailed down. He examined it carefully, as he did every other part of the room. He decided that he could cut the window out in less time than he could cut a hole through the roof.

He would have tried the bolt, but some of the men were asleep in the room below, and they could not pass them. If they could get out of the window, they might climb down the chimney. He had nothing but his old pocket-knife, and unfortunately a blade of that was broken; but the other was good. He told Jake his plan, who did not think much of it. Jack thought it was bed-time, so he knelt down and said his prayers. When he prayed for his mother he felt very bad, and a few tears stole out of his eyes. When he was done, Jack began to work. He worked carefully and quietly at first, making a

cut or two, and then listening to see if any one stirred below. This was slow work, and after a while he began to cut harder and faster. It showed so very little that he presently got impatient, and dug his knife deeper into the plank. It took a good hold, he gave a vigorous pull, and the blade snapped off in the middle. It made so much noise that one of the men below asked:

“What are those boys doin’ upstairs there? They ain’t tryin’ to git away, yo’ s’pose, are they? If so, we better fetch ‘em down here.”

Jack flung himself down beside Jake and held his breath. The soldiers listened, and then one of them said:

—“Oh, no, ‘tain’t nothin’ but rats. They’re fast asleep, I guess.”

Jack almost gave himself up for lost, for he now had only his broken blade; but after a while he went at it again, more carefully. He could see that he was making headway now, and he kept on cutting. Jake went fast asleep in the blanket, but Jack kept on. After a time he had nearly cut out one of the planks; he could get a hold on it and feel it give. At this point his impatience overcame him. He took hold and gave a wrench. The plank broke with a noise which startled not only Jake lying in his blanket, but the men below, one or two of whom sprang up. They began to discuss the noise.

"That warn't no rats," said one. "Them boys is trying to git out. I heard the window open. Go and see what they are doing," he said to his comrade.

Jack held his breath.

"You go yourself," said he. "I say it's rats."

"Rats! You've got rats!" said the other.
"I'll go, just to show you 'tain't rats." 

He got up, and taking a torch, came to the stair. Jack felt his heart jump up in his mouth. He just had time to stuff his hat into the hole he had made, to shut out the sky, and to fling himself down beside Jake and roll up in the blanket, when the bolt was pulled back and the man entered. He held the torch high above his head and looked around. Jack felt his hair rise. He could hear his heart thumping, and was sure the man heard it too. Jake stirred. Jack clutched him and held him. The man looked at them. The flame flickered and died, the man went out, the bolt grated in the staple, and the man went down the shaky stair.

"Well, you are right for once," Jack heard him say. "Must have been rats. They are both fast asleep on the floor."

Jack waited till the talk died away, and then he went to work again. He had learned a lesson by this time, and he worked carefully. At last

he had the hole big enough to creep through. It was right over the shoulder of the rickety old log chimney, and by making a quick turn he could catch hold of the "chinking" and climb down by it. He could see the men outside, but the chimney would be partly between them, and as they climbed down the shadow would, he believed, conceal them. He did not know how long he had been working, so he thought it best not to wait any longer. Therefore, after taking a peep through the cracks down on the men below, and finding them all asleep, he began to wake Jake. Having got him awake, he lay down by him and whispered his plans to him. He would go first to test the chimney, and then Jake would come. They were not to speak under any circumstances, and if either slipped, they were to lie perfectly still. The blanket—except one piece, which he cut off and hung over the hole to hide the sky, in case the men should come up and look for them—was to be taken along with them to fling over them if their flight should be discovered. The soldiers might think it just one of their blankets. After they got to the woods, they were to make for their tree. If they were pursued, they were to lie down under bushes and not speak or move. Having arranged everything, and fastened the piece of blanket so that it hung loosely over the hole, allowing them to get

through, Jack crawled out of the window and let himself down by his hands. His bare feet touched the shoulder of the chimney, and letting go, he climbed carefully down. Jake was already coming out of the window. Jack thought he heard a noise, and crept around the house through the weeds to see what it was. It was only a horse, and he was turning back, when he heard a great racket and scrambling, and with a tremendous thump Jake came tumbling down from the chimney into the weeds. He had the breath all knocked out of him, and lay quite still. Jack heard some one say, "What on earth was that?" and he had only time to throw the blanket over Jake and drop down into the weeds himself, when he heard the man come striding around the house. He had his gun in his hand. He passed right by him, between him and the dark blanket lying in the corner. He stopped, and looked all around. He was not ten feet from him, and was right over the blanket under which Jake lay. He actually stooped over, as if he was going to pull the blanket off of Jake, and Jack gave himself up for lost. But the man passed on, and Jack heard him talking to his comrades about the curious noise. They decided that it must have been a gun which burst somewhere. Jack's heart was in his mouth about Jake. He wondered if he was killed. He was about to crawl up to him, when

the blanket stirred and Jake's head peeped out, then went back.

"Jake, oh, Jake, are you dead?" asked Jack in a whisper.

"I dun know; b'lieve I is," answered Jake. "Mos' dead, anyway."

"No, you ain't. Is your leg broke?"

"Yes."

"No, 'tain't," encouraged Jack. "Waggle your toe; can you waggle your toe?"

"Yes; some, little bit," whispered Jake, kicking under the blanket.

"Waggle your other toe—waggle all your toes," whispered Jack.

The blanket acted as if some one was having a fit under it.

"Your leg ain't broke; you are all right," said Jack. "Come on."

Jake insisted that his leg was broken, and that he could not walk.

"Crawl," said Jack, creeping up to him. "Come on, like Injins. It's getting day."

He started off through the weeds, and Jake crawled after him. His ankle was sprained, however, and the briars were thick, and he made slow progress, so Jack crawled along by him through the weeds, helping him.

They were about half-way across the little clearing when they heard a noise behind them.

Lights were moving about in the house, and, looking back, Jack saw men moving around the house, and a man poked his head out of the window.

"Here's where they escaped," they called. Another man below the window called out, "Here's their track, where they went. They cannot have gone far. We can catch them." They started toward them. It was the supreme moment.

"Run, Jake; run for the woods!" cried Jack, springing to his feet and pulling Jake up.

They struck out. Jake was limping, however, and Jack put his arm under him and supported him along. They heard a cry behind them, "There they go! catch them!" But they were almost at the woods, and a second later they were dashing through the bushes, heading straight for their crossing at the old tree. After a time they had to slow up, for Jake's ankle pained him. Jack carried him on his back; but he was so heavy he had frequently to rest, and it was broad day before they got near the river. They kept on, however, and after a time reached the stream. There Jake declared he could not cross the poles. Jack urged him, and told him he would help him across. He showed him how. Jake was unstrung, and could not try it. He sat down and cried. Jack said he would go home and bring him help. Jake thought this best. Jack crawled over the pole, and was nearly across, when, looking back,

he saw a number of soldiers on the hill riding through the woods.

"Come on, Jake; here they come!" he called. The soldiers saw him at the same moment, and some of them started down the hill. A shot or two were fired toward them. Jake began to cry. Jack was safe, but he turned and crawled back over the pole toward him. "Come on, Jake; they are coming. They won't hit you—you can get over."

Jake started. Jack waited, and reached out his hand to him. Jake had gotten over the worst part, when his foot slipped, and with a cry he went down into the water. Jack caught his hand, but it slipped out of his grasp. He came up, with his arms beating wildly. "Help—help me!" he cried, and went down again. In went Jack, head foremost, and caught him by the arm. Jake clutched him. They came up. Jack thought he had him safe. "I've got you," he said. "Don't—" But before he could finish the sentence, Jake flung his arm around his neck and choked him, pulling him down under the water and getting it into his throat and nostrils. Jack struggled, and tried to get up, but he could not; Jake had him fast. He knew he was drowning. He remembered being down on the bottom of the river and thinking that if he could but get Jake to the top again he would be safe. He

thought that the Yankees might save him. He tried, but Jake had him tight, choking him. He thought how he had brought him there; he thought of his mother and father, and that he had not seen his mother that morning, and had not said his prayers, and then he did not know anything more.

The next thing he knew, some one said, "He's all right," and he heard confused voices, and was suffering some in his chest and throat, and he heard his mother's voice, and opening his eyes, he was in a tent. She was leaning over him, crying, and kissing him, and there were several gentlemen around the bed he was on. He was too weak to think much, but he felt glad that his mother was there.

"I went back after Jake," he said faintly.

"Yes, you did, like a man," said a gentleman in an officer's uniform, bending over him. "We saw you."

Jack turned from him. "Mother," he said, feebly, "we carried the horse back, but——"

"He is just outside the door," said the same gentleman; "he belongs to you. His owner has presented him to you."

"To me and Jake!" said Jack. "Where is Jake?" But they would not let him talk. They made him go to sleep.

KITTYKIN, AND THE PART SHE PLAYED IN THE WAR

KITTYKIN was about five months old when there was a great marching of soldiers backward and forward. The tents in the field beyond the woods were taken down and carried away in wagons, and there was an immense stir. The army was said to be "moving." There were rumors that the enemy was coming, and that there might be a battle near there. Evelyn was so young that she did not understand any more of it than Kittykin did; but her mother appeared so troubled that Evelyn knew it was very bad, and became frightened, though she did not know why. Her mammy soon gave her such a gloomy account, that Evelyn readily agreed with her that it was "like torment." As for Kittykin, if she had been born in a battle, she could not have been more unconcerned. In a day or two it was known that the main body of the army was some little way off on a long ridge, and that the enemy had taken up its position on another hill not far distant, and Evelyn's home was between them; but there was no battle. Each army began to in-

trench itself, and in a little while there was a long red bank stretched across the far edge of the great field behind the house, which Evelyn was told was "breastworks" for the picket line; and she pointed them out to Kittykin, who blinked and yawned as if she did not care the least bit if they were.

Next morning a small squadron of cavalry came galloping by. A body of the enemy had been seen, and they were going to learn what it meant. In a little while they came back.

"The enemy," they said, "were advancing, and there would probably be a skirmish right there immediately."

As they rode by, they urged Evelyn's mamma either to leave the house at once or to go down into the basement, where they might be safe from the bullets. Then they galloped on across the field to get the rest of their men, who were in the trenches beyond. Before they reached there a lot of men appeared on the edge of the wood in front of the house. No one could tell how many they were; but the sun gleamed on their arms, and there was evidently a good force. At first they were on horseback; but there was a "Bop! bop!" from the trenches in the field behind the house, and they rode back, and did not come out any more. Next morning, however, they, too, had dug a trench. These, Evelyn heard

some one say, were a picket line. About eleven o'clock they came out into the field, and they seemed to have spread themselves out behind a little rise or knoll in front of the house. Mammy's teeth were just chattering, and she went to moaning and saying her prayers as hard as she could; and Evelyn's mamma told her to take Evelyn down into the basement, and she would bring the baby. So mammy, who had been following mamma about, seized Evelyn and rushed with her downstairs, where, although they were quite safe, as the windows were only half above the ground, she fell on her face on the floor, praying as if her last hour had come. "Bop! bop!" went some muskets up behind the house. "Bang! bop! bang!" went some on the other side.

Evelyn suddenly remembered Kittykin. "Where was she?" The last time she had seen her was a half-hour before, when she had been lying curled up on the back steps, fast asleep in the sun. Suppose she should be there now, she would certainly be killed, for the back steps ran right out into the yard so as to be just the place for Kittykin to be shot. So thought Evelyn. "Bang! bang!" went the guns again—somewhere. Evelyn dragged a chair up to a window and looked. Her heart almost stopped; for there, out in the yard, quite clear of the houses, was Kittykin, standing some way up the trunk of a tall

locust-tree, looking curiously around. Her little white body shone like a small patch of snow against the dark-brown bark. Evelyn sprang down from the chair, and forgetting everything, rushed through the entry and out of doors.

“Kitty, kitty, kitty!” she called. “Kittykin, come here! You’ll be killed! Come here, Kittykin!”

Kittykin, however, was in for a game, and as her little mistress, with her golden hair flying in the breeze, ran toward her, she rushed scampering still higher up the tree. Evelyn could see that there were some men scattered out in the fields on either side of her, some of them stooping, and some lying down, and as she ran on toward the tree she heard a “Bang! bang!” on each side, and she saw little puffs of white smoke, and something went “Zoo-ee-ee” up in the air; but she did not think about herself, she was so frightened for Kittykin.

“Kitty, kitty! Come down, Kittykin!” she called, running up to the tree and holding up her arms to her. Kittykin might, perhaps, have liked to come down now, but she could no longer do so; she was too high up. She looked down, first over one shoulder and then over the other, but it was too high to jump. She could not turn around, and her head began to swim. She grew so dizzy, she was afraid she might fall, so she

dug her little sharp claws into the bark, and began to cry.

Evelyn would have run back to tell her mamma (who, having sent the baby downstairs to mamma, was still busy upstairs trying to hide some things, and so did not know she was out in the yard), but she was so afraid Kittykin might be killed that she could not let her get out of her sight. Indeed, she was so absorbed in Kittykin that she forgot all about everything else. She even forgot all about the soldiers. But though she did not notice the soldiers, it seemed that some of them had observed her. Just as the leader of the Confederate picket line was about to give an order to make a dash for the houses in the yard, to his horror he saw a little girl in a white dress and with flying hair suddenly run out into the clear space right between him and the soldiers on the other side, and stop under a tree just in the line of their fire. His heart jumped into his mouth as he sprang to his feet and waved his hands wildly to call attention to the child. Then shouting to his men to stop firing, he walked out in front of the line, and came at a rapid stride down the slope. The others all stood still and almost held their breaths for fear some one would shoot; but no one did. Evelyn was so busy trying to coax Kittykin down that she did not notice anything until she heard some one call out:

"For Heaven's sake, run into the house, quick!"

She looked around and saw the gentleman hurrying toward her. He appeared to be very much excited.

"What on earth are you doing out here?" he gasped, as he came running up to her.

He was a young man, with just a little light mustache, and with a little gold braid on the sleeves of his gray jacket; and though he seemed very much surprised, he looked very kind.

"I want my Kittykin," said Evelyn, answering him, and looking up the tree, with a little wave of her hand toward where Kittykin still clung tightly. Somehow she felt at the moment that this gentleman could help her better than any one else.

Kittykin, however, apparently thought differently about it, for she suddenly stopped mewing, and as if she felt it unsafe to be so near a stranger, she climbed carefully up until she reached a limb, in the crotch of which she ensconced herself, and peeped curiously over at them with a look of great satisfaction in her face, as much as to say, "Now I'm safe. I'd like to see you get me."

The gentleman was stroking Evelyn's hair, and was looking at her very intently, when a voice called to him from the other side:

"Hello, Johnny! what's the matter?"

Evelyn looked around, and saw another gentleman coming toward them. He was older than the first one, and had on a blue coat, while the first had on a gray one. She knew one was a Confederate and the other was a Yankee, and for a second she was afraid they might shoot each other; but her first friend called out:

"Her kitten is up the tree. Come ahead!"

He came on, and looked for a second up at Kittykin, but he looked at Evelyn really hard, and suddenly stooped down, and putting his arm around her, drew her up to him. She got over her fear in a minute.

"Kittykin's up there, and I'm afraid she'll be kilt." She waved her hand up over her head, where Kittykin was taking occasion to put a few more limbs between herself and the enemy.

"It's rather a dangerous place when the boys are out hunting, eh, Johnny?" He laughed as he stood up again.

"Yes, for as big a fellow as you. You wouldn't stand the ghost of a show."

"I guess I'd feel small enough up there." And both men laughed.

By this time the men on both sides began to come up, with their guns over their arms.

"Hello! what's up?" some of them called out.

"Her kitten's up," said the first two; and, to

make good their words, Kittykin, not liking so many people below her, shifted her position again, and went up to a fresh limb, from which she again peeped over at them. The men all gathered around Evelyn and began to talk to her, and both she and Kittykin were surprised to hear them joking and laughing together in the friendliest way.

"What are you doing out here?" they asked; and to all she made the same reply:

"I want my Kittykin."

Suddenly her mamma came out. She had just gone downstairs, and had learned where Evelyn was. The two officers went up and spoke to her, but the men still crowded around Evelyn.

"She'll come down," said one. "All you have to do is to let her alone."

"No, she won't. She can't come down. It makes her head swim," said Evelyn.

"That's true," thought Kittykin up in the tree, and to let them understand it she gave a little "Mew."

"I don't see how anything can swim when it's as dry as it is around here," said a fellow in gray.

A man in blue handed him his canteen, which he at once accepted, and after surprising Evelyn by smelling it—which she knew was dreadfully bad manners—turned it up to his lips. She heard the liquid gurgling.

As he handed it back to its owner, he said: "Yank, I'm mighty glad I didn't shoot you. I might have hit that canteen." At which there was a laugh, and the canteen went around until it was empty.

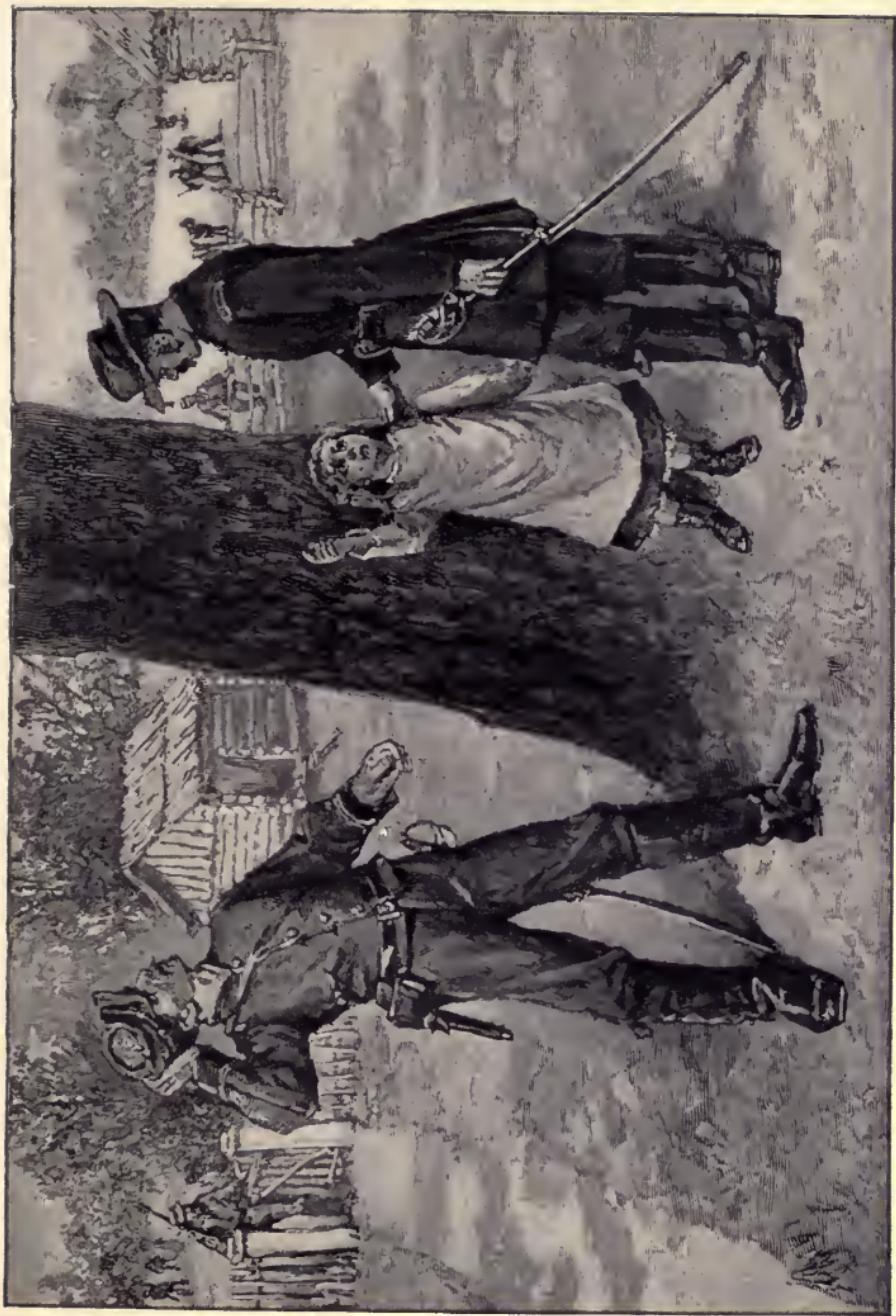
Suddenly Kittykin from her high perch gave a faint "Mew," which said, as plainly as words could say it, that she wanted to get down and could not.

Evelyn's big brown eyes filled with tears. "I want my Kittykin," she said, her little lip trembling.

Instantly a dozen men unbuckled their belts, laid their guns on the ground, and pulled off their coats, each one trying to be the first to climb the tree. It was, however, too large for them to reach far enough around to get a good hold on it, so climbing it was found to be far more difficult than it looked to be.

"Why don't you cut it down?" asked some one.

But Evelyn cried out that that would kill Kittykin, so the man who suggested it was called a fool by the others. At last it was proposed that one man should stand against the tree and another should climb up on his shoulders, when he might get his arms far enough around it to work his way up. A stout fellow with a gray jacket on planted himself firmly against the trunk, and



"I want my Kittykin."

one who had taken off a blue jacket climbed up on his shoulders, and might have got up very well if he had not remarked that as the Johnnies had walked over him in the last battle, it was but fair that he should now walk over a Johnny. This joke tickled the man under him so that he slipped away and let him down. At length, however, three or four men got good "holds," and went slowly up one after the other, amid such encouraging shouts from their friends on the ground below as, "Go it, Yank, the Johnny's almost got you!" "Look out, Johnny, the Yanks are right behind you!" etc., while Kittykin gazed down in astonishment from above, and Evelyn looked up breathless from below. With much pulling and kicking, four men finally got up to the lowest limb, after which the climbing was comparatively easy. A new difficulty, however, presented itself. Kittykin suddenly took alarm, and retreated still higher up among the branches.

The higher they climbed after that, the higher she climbed, until she was away up on one of the topmost boughs, which was far too slender for any one to follow her. There she turned, and looked back with alternate alarm and satisfaction expressed in her countenance. If the men stirred, she stood ready to fly; if they kept still, she settled down and mewed plaintively. Once or twice,

as they moved, she took fright and looked almost as if about to jump.

Evelyn was breathless with excitement. "Don't let her jump," she called, "she will get kilt!"

The men, too, were anxious to prevent that. They called to her, held out their hands, and coaxed her in every tone by which a kitten is supposed to be influenced. But it was all in vain. No cajoleries, no promises, no threats, were of the least avail. Kittykin was there safe out of their reach, and there she would remain, sixty feet above the ground. Suddenly she saw that something was occurring below. She saw the men all gather around her little mistress, and could hear her at first refuse to let something be done, and then consent. She could not make out what it was, though she strained her ears. She remembered to have heard mammy tell her little mistress once that "curiosity had killed a cat," and she was afraid to think too much about it so high up in the tree. Still, when she heard an order given, "Go back and get your blankets," and saw a whole lot of the men go running off into the field on either side, and presently come back with their arms full of blankets, she could not help wondering what they were going to do. They at once began to unroll the blankets and hold them open all around the tree, until a large circle of the ground was quite hidden.

"Ah," said Kittykin, "it's a wicked trap!" and she dug her little claws deep into the bark, and made up her mind that nothing should induce her to jump. Presently she heard the soldiers in the tree under her call to those on the ground:

"Are you ready?"

And they said, "All right!"

"Ah," said Kittykin, "they cannot get down, either. Serves them right!"

But suddenly they all waved their arms at her, and cried, "Scat!"

Goodness! The idea of crying "scat" at a kitten when she is up in a tree!—"scat," which fills a kitten's breast with terror! It was brutal, and then it was all so unexpected. It came very near making her fall. As it was, it set her heart to thumping and bumping against her ribs, like a marble in a box. "Ah," she thought, "if those brutes below were but mice, and I had them on the carpet!" So she dug her claws into the bark, which was quite tender up there, and it was well she did, for she heard some one call something below that sounded like "Shake!" and before she knew it the man nearest her reached up, and, seizing the limb on which she was, screwed up his face, and— Goodness! it nearly shook the teeth out of her mouth and the eyes out of her head.

Shake! shake! shake! it came again, each time nearly tearing her little claws out of their sockets and scaring her to death. She saw the ground swim far below her, and felt that she would be mashed to death. Shake! shake! shake! She could not hold out much longer, and she spat down at them. How those brutes below laughed! She formed a desperate resolve. She would get even with them. "Ah, if they were but—" Shake! sha— With a fierce spit, partly of rage, partly of fear, Kittykin let go, whirled suddenly, and flung herself on the upturned face of the man next beneath her, from him to the man below him, and finally, digging her little claws deep in his flesh, sprang with a wild leap clear of the boughs, and shot whizzing out into the air, while the two men, thrown off their guard by the suddenness of the attack, loosed their hold, and went crashing down into the forks upon those below.

The first thing Evelyn and the men on the ground knew was the crash of the falling men and the sight of Kittykin coming whizzing down, her little claws clutching wildly at the air. Before they could see what she was, she gave a bounce like a trap-ball as high as a man's head, and then, as she touched the ground again, shot like a wild sky-rocket hissing across the yard, and, with her tail all crooked to one side and as big as her body, vanished under the house. Oh, such a shout

as there was from the soldiers! Evelyn heard them yelling as she ran off after Kittykin to see if she wasn't dead. They fairly howled with delight as the men in the tree, with scratched faces and torn clothes, came crawling down. They looked very sheepish as they landed among their comrades; but the question whether Kittykin had landed in a blanket or had hit the solid ground fifty feet out somewhat relieved them. They all agreed that she had bounced twenty feet.

Why Kittykin was not killed outright was a marvel. One of her eyes was a little bunged up, the claws on three of her feet were loosened, and for a week she felt as if she had been run through a sausage mill; but she never lost any of her speed. Ever afterward when she saw a soldier she would run for life, and hide as far back under the house as she could get, with her eyes shining like two little live coals.

For some time, indeed, she lived in perpetual terror, for the soldiers of both lines used to come up to the house, as the friendship they formed that day never was changed, and though they remained on the two opposite hills for quite a while, they never fired a shot at each other. They used instead to meet and exchange tobacco and coffee, and laugh over the way Kittykin routed their joint forces in the tree the day of the skirmish.

As for Kittykin, she never put on any airs

about it. She did not care for that sort of glory. She never afterward could tolerate a tree; the earth was good enough for her; and the highest she ever climbed was up in her little mistress's lap.

TWO LITTLE CONFEDERATES

FRANK AND WILLY were two little Confederates who lived at Oakland during the war. Frank and Willy's father, older brother, and cousins were in the Confederate army. Frank and Willy, with old black "Uncle Balla," the driver, looked after their mother and the place. The Confederate, and later the Union soldiers, overran that part of the country. This gave rise to many exciting adventures for the boys.

I

THEIR ADVENTURE WITH UNION RAIDERS

One evening in May, about sunset, as the boys were playing in the yard, a man came riding through the place on the way to Richmond. His horse showed that he had been riding hard. He asked the nearest way to "Ground-Squirrel Bridge." The Yankees, he said, were coming. It was a raid. He had ridden ahead of them, and had left them about Greenbay depot, which they had set on fire. He was in too great a hurry

to stop and get something to eat, and he rode off, leaving much excitement behind him; for Green-bay was only eight miles away, and Oakland lay right between two roads to Richmond, down one or the other of which the party of raiders must certainly pass.

It was the first time the boys ever saw their mother exhibit so much emotion as she then did. She came to the door and called:

"Balla, come here!" Her voice sounded to the boys a little strained and troubled, and they ran up the steps and stood by her. Balla came to the portico, and looked up with an air of inquiry. He, too, showed excitement.

"Balla, I want you to know that if you wish to go, you can do so."

"Hi, Mistis—" began Balla, with an air of reproach; but she cut him short and kept on.

"I want you all to know it." She was speaking now so as to be heard by the cook and the maids, who were standing about the yard listening to her. "I want you all to know it—every one on the place! You can go, if you wish; but if you go, you can never come back!"

"Hi, Mistis," broke in Uncle Balla, "whar is I got to go? I wuz born on dis place, an' I 'spec' to die here, an' be buried right *yonder*;" and he turned and pointed up to the dark clumps of trees that marked the graveyard on the hill, a half

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Two Little Confederates

mile away, where the colored people were buried.

"Dat I does," he affirmed positively. "Y' all sticks by us, an' we'll stick by you."

"I know I ain' gwine nowhar wid no Yankees or nothin'," said Lucy Ann in an undertone.

"Dee tell me dee got hoofs and horns," laughed one of the women in the yard.

The boys' mother started to say something further to Balla, but though she opened her lips, she did not speak; she turned suddenly and walked into the house and into her chamber, where she shut the door behind her. The boys thought she was angry, but when they softly followed her, a few minutes afterward, she got up hastily from where she had been kneeling beside the bed, and they saw that she had been crying. A murmur under the window called them back to the portico. It had begun to grow dark; but a bright spot was glowing on the horizon, and on this every one's gaze was fixed.

"Where is it, Balla? What is it?" asked the boys' mother, her voice no longer strained and harsh, but even softer than usual.

"It's the depot, madam. They's burnin' it. That man told me they was burnin' ev'ywhar they went."

"Will they be here to-night?" asked his mistress.

"No, marm; I don' hardly think they will.

That man said they couldn't travel more than thirty miles a day; but they'll be plenty of 'em to-morrow—to breakfast." He gave a nervous sort of laugh.

"Here—you all come here," said their mistress to the servants. She went to the smoke-house and unlocked it. "Go in there and get down the bacon; take a piece, each of you." A great deal was still left. "Balla, step here." She called him aside and spoke earnestly in an undertone.

"Yes'm, that's so; that's jes' what I wuz gwine do," the boys heard him say.

Their mother sent the boys out. She went and locked herself in her room, but they heard her footsteps as she turned about within, and now and then they heard her opening and shutting drawers and moving chairs.

In a little while she came out.

"Frank, you and Willy go and tell Balla to come to the chamber door. He may be out in the stable."

They dashed out, proud to bear so important a message. They could not find him, but an hour later they heard him coming from the stable. He at once went into the house. They rushed into the chamber, where they found the door of the closet open.

"Balla, come in here," called their mother

from within. "Have you got them safe?" she asked.

"Yes'm; jes' as safe as they kin be. I want to be 'bout here when they come, or I'd go down an' stay whar they is."

"What is it?" asked the boys.

"Where is the best place to put that?" she said, pointing to a large strong box in which, they knew, the finest silver was kept; indeed, all excepting what was used every day on the table.

"Well, I declar', Mistis, that's hard to tell," said the old driver, "without it's in the stable."

"They may burn that down."

"That's so. You might bury it under the floor of the smoke-house?"

"I have heard that they always look for silver there," said the boys' mother. "How would it do to bury it in the garden?"

"That's the very place I was gwine name," said Balla, with flattering approval. "They can't burn *that* down, and if they gwine dig for it then they'll have to dig a long time before they git over that big garden." He stooped and lifted up one end of the box to test its weight.

"I thought of the other end of the flower-bed, between the big rose-bush and the lilac."

"That's the very place I had in my mind," declared the old man. "They won' never fine it dyah!"

"We know a good place," said the boys both together; "it's a heap better than that. It's where we bury our treasures when we play 'Black-beard the Pirate.' "

"Very well," said their mother; "I don't care to know where it is until after to-morrow, anyhow. I know I can trust you," she added, addressing Balla.

"Yes'm, you know dat," said he simply. "I'll jes' go an' git my hoe."

The boys were too excited to get sleepy before the silver was hidden. Their mother told them they might go down into the garden and help Balla, on condition that they would not talk.

"That's the way we always do when we bury the treasure. Ain't it, Willy?" asked Frank.

"If a man speaks, it's death!" declared Willy, slapping his hand on his side as if to draw a sword, striking a theatrical attitude and speaking in a deep voice.

"Give the 'galleon' to us," said Frank.

"No; be off with you!" said their mother.

"That ain't the way," said Frank. "A pirate never digs the hole until he has his treasure at hand. To do so would prove him but a novice; wouldn't it, Willy?"

"Well, I leave it all to you, my little buccaneers," said their mother, laughing. "I'll take

care of the spoons and forks we use every day. I'll just hide them away in a hole somewhere."

The boys started off after Balla with a shout, but remembered their errand and suddenly hushed down to a little squeal of delight at being actually engaged in burying treasure—real silver. It seemed too good to be true, and withal there was a real excitement about it, for how could they know but that some one might watch them from some hiding-place, or might even fire into them as they worked?

They met the old fellow as he was coming from the carriage-house with a hoe and a spade in his hands. He was on his way to the garden in a very straightforward manner, but the boys made him understand that to bury treasure it was necessary to be particularly secret, and after some little grumbling, Balla humored them.

The difficulty of getting the box of silver out of the house secretly, while all the family were up and the servants were moving about, was so great that this part of the affair had to be carried on in a manner different from the usual programme of pirates of the first water. Even the boys had to admit this; and they yielded to old Balla's advice on this point, but made up for it by additional formality, ceremony, and secrecy in pointing out the spot where the box was to be hid.

Old Balla was quite accustomed to their games

and fun—their “pranks,” as he called them. He accordingly yielded willingly when they marched him to a point at the lower end of the yard, on the opposite side from the garden, and left him. But he was inclined to give trouble when they both reappeared with a gun, and in a whisper announced that they must march first up the ditch which ran by the spring around the foot of the garden.

“Look here, boys; I ain’ got time to fool with you chillern,” said the old man. “Ain’t you hear your ma tell me she ’pend on me to bury that silver what yo’ gran’ma and gran’pa used to eat off o’—an’ don’ wan’ nobody to know nothin’ ‘bout it? An’ y’ all comin’ here with guns, like you huntin’ squ’rr’ls, an’ now talkin’ ‘bout wadin’ in the ditch!”

“But, Unc’ Balla, that’s the way all buccaneers do,” protested Frank.

“Yes, buccaneers always go by water,” said Willy.

“And we can stoop in the ditch and come in at the far end of the garden, so nobody can see us,” added Frank.

“Bookanear or bookafar, I’se gwine in dat garden and dig a hole wid my hoe, an’ I is too ole to be wadin’ in a ditch like chillern. I got the misery in my knee now, so bad I’se sca’cely able to stand. I don’t know huccome y’ all ain’t sat-

isfied with the place you' ma an' I done pick, anyways."

This was too serious a mutiny for the boys. So it was finally agreed that one gun should be returned to the office, and that they should enter by the gate, after which Balla was to go with the boys by the way they should show him, and see the spot they thought of.

They took him down through the weeds around the garden, crouching under the rose-bushes, and at last stopped at a spot under the slope, completely surrounded by shrubbery.

"Here is the spot," said Frank in a whisper, pointing under one of the bushes.

"It's in a line with the longest limb of the big oak-tree by the gate," added Willy, "and when this locust bush and that cedar grow to be big trees, it will be just half-way between them."

As this seemed to Balla a very good place, he set to work at once to dig, the two boys helping him as well as they could. It took a great deal longer to dig the hole in the dark than they had expected, and when they got back to the house everything was quiet.

The boys had their hats pulled over their eyes, and had turned their jackets inside out to disguise themselves.

"It's a first-rate place! Ain't it, Unc' Balla?"

they said, as they entered the chamber where their mother and aunt were waiting for them.

"Do you think it will do, Balla?" their mother asked.

"Oh, yes, madam; it's far enough, an' they got mighty comical ways to get dyah, wadin' in ditch an' things—it will do. I ain' sho' I kin fin' it ag'in myself." He was not particularly enthusiastic. Now, however, he shouldered the box, with a grunt at its weight, and the party went slowly out through the back door into the dark. The glow of the burning depot was still visible in the west.

Then it was decided that Willy should go before—he said, to "reconnoitre"; Balla said, "to open the gate and lead the way"; and that Frank should bring up the rear.

They trudged slowly on through the darkness, Frank and Willy watching on every side, old Balla stooping under the weight of the big box.

After they were some distance in the garden they heard, or thought they heard, a sound back at the gate, but decided that it was nothing but the latch clicking, and they went on down to their hiding-place.

In a little while the black box was well settled in the hole, and the dirt was thrown upon it. The replaced earth made something of a mound, which was unfortunate. They had not thought of this;

but they covered it with leaves, and agreed that it was so well hidden, the Yankees would never dream of looking there.

"Unc' Balla, where are your horses?" asked one of the boys.

"That's for me to know, an' them to find out what kin," replied the old fellow with a chuckle of satisfaction.

The whole party crept back out of the garden, and the boys were soon dreaming of buccaneers and pirates.

The boys were not sure that they had even fallen asleep, when they heard Lucy Ann call outside. They turned over to take another nap. She was coming up to the door. No, for it was a man's step, it must be Uncle Balla's; they heard horses trampling and people talking. In a second the door was flung open, and a man strode into the room, followed by one, two, a half-dozen others, all white and all in uniform. They were Yankees. The boys were too frightened to speak. They thought they were arrested for hiding the silver.

"Get up, you lazy little rebels!" cried one of the intruders, not unpleasantly. As the boys were not very quick in obeying, being really too frightened to do more than sit up in bed, the man caught the mattress by the end, and, lifting it with a

jerk, emptied them and all the bedclothes out into the middle of the floor in a heap. At this all the other men laughed. A minute more and he had drawn his sword. The boys expected no less than to be immediately killed. They were almost paralyzed. But instead of plunging his sword into them, the man began to stick it into the mattresses and to rip them up; while others pulled open the drawers of the bureau and pitched the things on the floor.

The boys felt themselves to be in a very exposed and defenceless condition; and Willy, who had become tangled in the bedclothes, and had been a little hurt in falling, now that the strain was somewhat over, began to cry.

In a minute a shadow darkened the doorway, and their mother stood in the room.

“Leave the room instantly!” she cried.
“Aren’t you ashamed to frighten children?”

“We haven’t hurt the brats,” said the man with the sword good-naturedly.

“Well, you terrify them to death. It’s just as bad. Give me those clothes!” and she sprang forward and snatched the boys’ clothes from the hands of a man who had taken them up. She flung the suits to the boys, who lost no time in slipping into them.

They had at once recovered their courage in the presence of their mother. She seemed to

them, as she braved the intruders, the grandest person they had ever seen. Her face was white, but her eyes were like coals of fire. They were very glad she had never looked or talked so to them.

When they got outdoors the yard was full of soldiers. They were upon the porches, in the entry, and in the house. The smoke-house was open, and so were the doors of all the other out-houses, and now and then a man passed, carrying some article which the boys recognized.

In a little while the soldiers had taken everything they could carry conveniently, and even things which must have caused them some inconvenience. They had secured all the bacon that had been left in the smoke-house, as well as all other eatables they could find. It was a queer sight, to see the fellows sitting on their horses with a ham or a pair of fowls tied to one side of the saddle, and an engraving, or a package of books, or some ornament, to the other.

A new party of men had by this time come up from the direction of the stables.

“Old man, come here!” called some of them to Balla, who was standing expostulating with the men who were about the fire.

“Who—me?” asked Balla.

“B’ain’t you the carriage driver?”

“Ain’t I the keridge driver?”

"Yes, *you*; we know you are, so you need not be lying about it."

"Hi! yes, I the keridge driver. Who say I ain't?"

"Well, where have you hid those horses? Come, we want to know quick," said the fellow roughly, taking out his pistol in a threatening way.

The old man's eyes grew wide. "Hi! befo' de Lord, Marster, how I know anything of the horses ef they ain't in the stable? There's where we keep horses."

"Here, you come with us! We won't have no foolin' 'bout this," said his questioner, seizing him by the shoulder and jerking him angrily around. "If you don't show us pretty quick where those horses are, we'll put a bullet or two into you. March off there!"

He was backed by a half-dozen more, but the pistol which was at old Balla's head was his most efficient ally.

"Hi! Marster, don't p'int dat thing at me that way. I ain' ready to die yit; an' I ain' like dem things noways," protested Balla.

There is no telling how much further his courage could have withstood their threats, for the boys' mother made her appearance. She was about to bid Balla show where the horses were, when a party rode into the yard leading them.

"Hi! there are Bill and John, now!" exclaimed the boys, recognizing the black carriage horses which were being led along.

"Well, ef dee ain't got 'em, sho' 'nough!" exclaimed the old driver, forgetting his fear of the cocked pistols.

"Gentlemen, marsters, don't teck my horses, ef you *please!*!" he pleaded, pushing through the group that surrounded him, and approaching the man who led the horses.

They only laughed at him.

Both the boys ran to their mother, and flinging their arms about her, burst out crying.

In a few minutes the men started off, riding across the fields, and in a little while not a soldier was in sight.

"I wish Marse William could see you ridin' 'cross them fields," said Balla, looking after the retiring troop in futile indignation.

Investigation revealed the fact that every horse and mule on the plantation had been carried off, except only two or three old mules, which were evidently considered not worth taking.

II

THE TWO LITTLE CONFEDERATES' CAPTURE BY
UNION SOLDIERS

Hugh, the elder brother of the two little Confederates, and his General were in concealment in the woods, hunted by Union raiders. Frank and Willy had been to carry them food, and were returning home.

After crossing the gully, and walking on through the woods for what they thought a safe distance, they turned into the path.

They were talking very merrily about the General and Hugh, and their friend Mills, and were discussing some romantic plan for the recapture of their horses from the enemy, when they came out of the path into the road, and found themselves within twenty yards of a group of Federal soldiers, quietly sitting on their horses, evidently guarding the road.

The sight of the blue-coats made the boys jump. They would have crept back, but it was too late; they caught the eye of the man nearest them. They ceased talking as suddenly as birds in the trees stop chirruping when the hawk sails over; and when one Yankee called to them, in a stern tone, "Halt, there!" and started to come toward them, their hearts were in their mouths.

"Where are you boys going?" he asked as he came up to them.

"Going home."

"Where do you belong?"

"Over there, at Oakland," pointing in the direction of their home, which seemed suddenly to have moved a thousand miles away.

"Where have you been?" The other soldiers had come up now.

"Been down this way." The boys' voices were never so meek before. Each reply was like an apology.

"Been to see your brother?" asked one who had not spoken before, a pleasant-looking fellow. The boys looked at him. They were paralyzed by dread of the approaching question.

"Now, boys, we know where you have been," said a small fellow who wore a yellow chevron on his arm. He had a thin mustache and a sharp nose, and rode a wiry, dull sorrel horse. "You may just as well tell us all about it. We know you've been to see 'em, and we are going to make you carry us where they are."

"No, we ain't," said Frank doggedly.

Willy expressed his determination also.

"If you don't, it's going to be pretty bad for you," said the little corporal. He gave an order to two of the men, who sprang from their horses, and catching Frank, swung him up behind an-

other cavalryman. The boy's face was very pale, but he bit his lip.

"Go ahead," continued the corporal to a number of his men, who started down the path. "You four men remain here till we come back," he said to the men on the ground, and to two others on horseback. "Keep him here," jerking his thumb toward Willy, whose face was already burning with emotion.

"I'm going with Frank," said Willy. "Let me go." This to the man who had hold of him by the arm. "Frank, make him let me go!" he shouted, bursting into tears, and turning on his captor with all his little might.

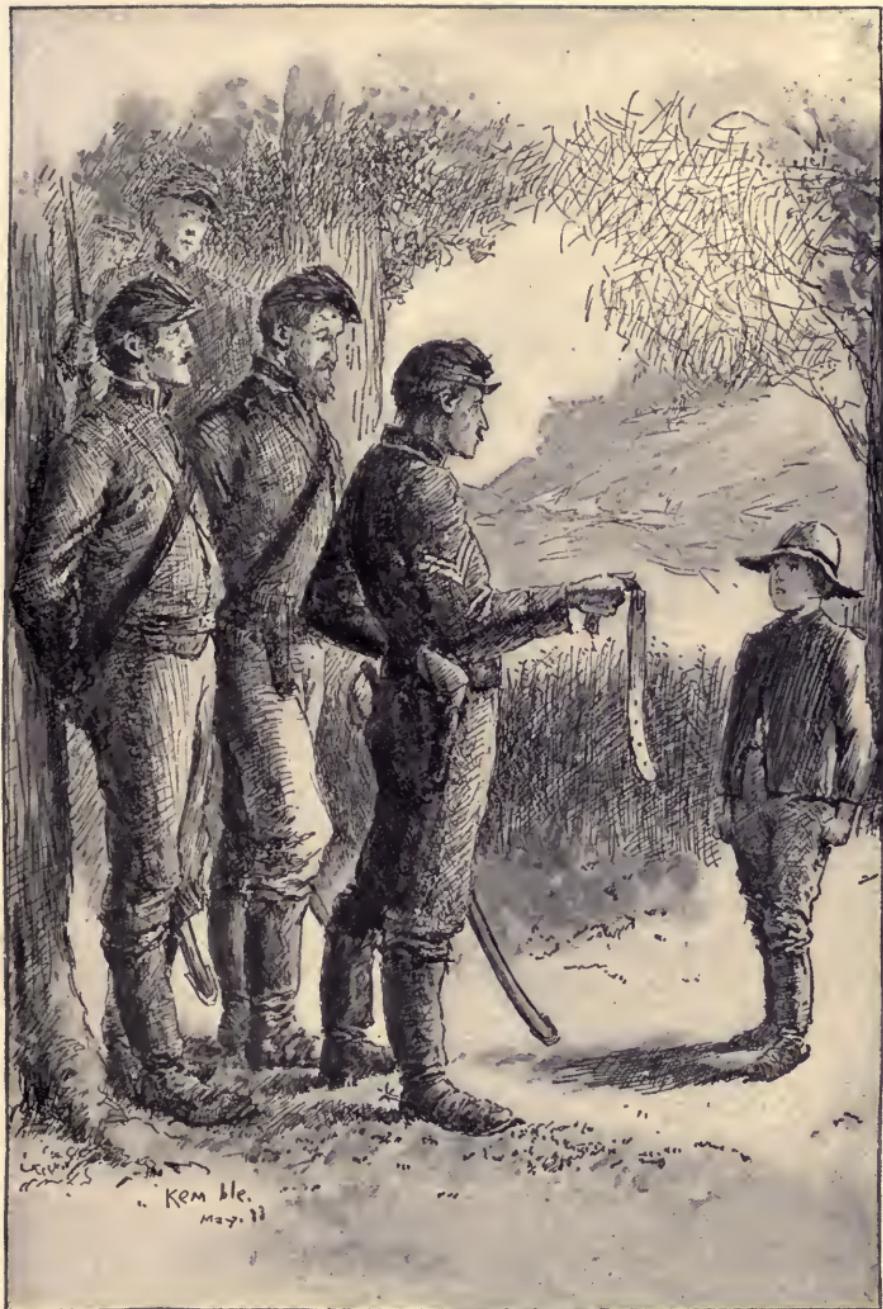
"Willy, he's not goin' to hurt you; don't you tell," called Frank, squirming until he dug his heels so into the horse's flanks that the horse began to kick up.

"Keep quiet, Johnny; he's not goin' to hurt him," said one of the men kindly. He had a brown beard and shining white teeth.

They rode slowly down the narrow path, the dragoon holding Frank by the leg. Deep down in the woods, beyond a small branch, the path forked.

"Which way?" asked the corporal, stopping and addressing Frank.

Frank set his mouth tight and looked him in the eyes.



The boy faced his captor, who held a strap in one hand.

"Which is it?" the corporal repeated.

"I ain't going to tell," said he firmly.

"Look here, Johnny; we've got you, and we are going to make you tell us; so you might just as well do it, easy. If you don't, we're goin' to make you."

The boy said nothing.

"You men dismount. Stubbs, hold the horses." He himself dismounted, and three others did the same, giving their horses to a fourth.

"Get down"—this to Frank and the soldier behind whom he was riding. The soldier dismounted, and the boy slipped off after him and faced his captor, who held a strap in one hand.

"Are you goin' to tell us?" he asked.

"No."

"Don't you know?" He came a step nearer, and held the strap forward. There was a long silence. The boy's face paled perceptibly, but took on a look as if the proceedings were indifferent to him.

"If you say you don't know—" said the man, hesitating in face of the boy's resolution. "Don't you know where they are?"

"Yes, I know, but I ain't goin' to tell you," said Frank, bursting into tears.

"The little Johnny's game," said the soldier who had told him the others were not going to

hurt Willy. The corporal said something to this man in an undertone, to which he replied:

"You can try, but it isn't going to do any good. I don't half like it, anyway."

Frank had stopped crying after his first outburst.

"If you don't tell, we are going to shoot you," said the little soldier, drawing his pistol.

The boy shut his mouth close, and looked straight at the corporal. The man laid down his pistol, and seizing Frank, drew his hands behind him and tied them.

"Get ready, men," he said, as he drew the boy aside to a small tree, putting him with his back to it.

Frank thought his hour had come. He thought of his mother and Willy, and wondered if the soldiers would shoot Willy, too. His face twitched and grew ghastly white. Then he thought of his father, and of how proud he would be of his son's bravery when he should hear of it. This gave him strength.

"The knot—hurts my hands," he said.

The man leaned over and eased it a little.

"I wasn't crying because I was scared," said Frank.

The kind-looking fellow turned away.

"Now, boys, get ready," said the corporal, taking up his pistol.

How large it looked to Frank! He wondered where the bullets would hit him, and if the wounds would bleed, and whether he would be left alone all night out there in the woods, and if his mother would come and kiss him.

"I want to say my prayers," he said faintly.

The soldier made some reply which he could not hear, and the man with the beard started forward; but just then all grew dark before his eyes.

Next, he thought he must have been shot, for he felt wet about his face, and was lying down. He heard some one say, "He's coming to," and another replied, "Thank God!"

He opened his eyes. He was lying beside the little branch, with his head in the lap of the big soldier with the beard, and the little corporal was leaning over him throwing water in his face from a cap. The others were standing around.

"What's the matter?" asked Frank.

"That's all right," said the little corporal kindly. "We were just a-foolin' a bit with you, Johnny."

"We never meant to hurt you," said the other.
"You feel better now?"

"Yes; where's Willy?" He was too tired to move.

"He's all right. We'll take you to him."

"Am I shot?" asked Frank.

"No! Do you think we'd have touched a

hair of your head—and you such a brave little fellow? We were just trying to scare you a bit, and carried it too far, and you got a little faint—that's all."

The voice was so kindly that Frank was encouraged to sit up.

"Can you walk now?" asked the corporal, helping him and steadyng him as he rose to his feet.

"I'll take him," said the big fellow, and before the boy could move, he had stooped, taken Frank in his arms, and was carrying him back toward the place where they had left Willy, while the others followed after with the horses.

"I can walk," said Frank.

"No, I'll carry you, b-bless your heart!"

The boy did not know that the big dragoon was looking down at the light hair resting on his arm, and that while he trod the Virginia wood-path, in fancy he was home in Delaware; or that the pressure the boy felt from his strong arms, was a caress given for the sake of another boy far away on the Brandywine. A little while before they came in sight Frank asked to be put down.

The soldier gently set him on his feet, and, before he let him go, kissed him.

"I've got a curly-headed fellow at home, just the size of you," he said softly.

Frank saw that his eyes were moist. "I hope you'll get safe back to him," he said.

"God grant it!" said the soldier.

When they reached the squad at the gate they found Willy still in much distress on Frank's account; but he wiped his eyes when his brother reappeared, and listened with pride to the soldiers' praise of Frank's "grit," as they called it. When they let the boys go, the little corporal wished Frank to accept a five-dollar gold piece, but he politely declined it.

“NANCY PANSY”

I

ONE day, Tom Adams, a Union officer, stationed in the Southern town of Middleburgh, left camp and sauntered up the street alone, planning how he could get his company ordered once more to the front. He could not stand this life any longer. As he strolled along the walk the sound of the cheerful voices of girls behind the magnolias and rose bowers came to him, and a wave of homesickness swept over him as he thought of his sisters and little nieces away up North.

Suddenly, as he turned a corner, he saw a small figure walking slowly along before him; the great straw hat on the back of her head almost concealed the little body, but her sunny hair was peeping down below the broad brim, and Adams knew the child.

She carried under her arm an old cigar-box, out of one end of which peeped the head and shoulders of an old doll, the feet of which stuck out of the other end. A string hung from the box and trailed behind her on the pathway. She appeared to be very busy about something, and

to be perfectly happy, for as she walked along she was singing out of her content a wordless little song of her heart, "Tra-la-la, tra-la-la."

The young officer fell into the same gait with the child, and instinctively trod softly to keep from disturbing her. Just then, however, a burly fellow named Griff O'Meara, who had belonged to one of the companies which preceded them, and had been transferred to Adams's company, came down a side street and turned into the walk-way just behind the little maid. He seemed to be tipsy. The trailing string caught his eye, and he tipped forward and tried to step on it. Adams did not take in what the fellow was trying to do until he attempted it the second time. Then he called to him, but it was too late; he had stepped on the cord, and jerked the box, doll and all, from the child's arm. The doll fell, face down, on a stone and broke to pieces. The man gave a great laugh, as the little girl turned, with a cry of anguish, and stooping, began to pick up the fragments, weeping in a low, pitiful way. In a second, Adams sprang forward and struck the fellow a blow between the eyes which sent him staggering off the sidewalk, down in the road, flat on his back. He rose with an oath, but Adams struck him a second blow which laid him out again, and the fellow, finding him to be an officer, was glad to slink off. Adams then turned

to the child, whose tears, which had dried for a moment in her alarm at the fight, now began to flow again over her doll.

"Her pretty head's all broke! Oh—oh—oh!" she sobbed, trying vainly to get the pieces to fit into something like a face.

The young officer sat down on the ground by her. "Never mind, sissy," he said soothingly, "let me see if I can help you."

She confidently handed him the fragments, while she tried to stifle her sobs, and wiped her eyes with her little pinafore.

"Can you do it?" she asked dolefully behind her pinafore.

"I hope so. What's your name?"

"Nancy Pansy, and my dolly's named Harry."

"Harry!" Tom looked at the doll's dress and the fragments of face, which certainly were not masculine.

"Yes, Harry Hunter. He's my sweetheart." She looked at him to see that he understood her.

"Ah!"

"And sister's," she nodded confidently.

"Yes, I see. Where is he?"

"He's a captain now. He's gone away—away." She waved her hand in a wide sweep, to give an idea of the great distance it was.
"He's in the army."

"Come along with me," said Tom; "let's see

what we can do.” He gathered up all the broken pieces in his handkerchief, and set out in the direction from which he had come, Nancy Pansy at his side. She slipped her little hand confidently into his.

“ You knocked that bad man down for me, didn’t you? ” she said, looking up into his face. Tom had not felt until then what a hero he had been.

“ Yes,” he said quite graciously. The little warm fingers worked themselves yet farther into his palm.

At the corner they turned up the street toward the Court-house Square, and in a few minutes were in camp. At the sight of the child with Adams the whole camp turned out pell-mell, as if the “ long-roll ” had beat.

At first Nancy Pansy was a little shy, there was so much excitement, and she clung tightly to Tom Adams’s hand. She soon found, however, that they were all friendly.

Tom conducted her to his tent, where she was placed in a great chair, with a horse-cover over it, as a sort of throne. The story of O’Meara’s act excited so much indignation that Tom felt it necessary to explain fully the punishment he had given him.

Nancy Pansy, feeling that she had an interest in the matter, suddenly took up the narrative.

"Yes, he jus' knocked him down," she said with the most charming confidence, to her admiring audience, her pink cheeks glowing and her great eyes lighting up at the recital, as she illustrated Tom's act with a most expressive gesture of her by no means clean little fist.

The soldiers about her burst into a roar of delighted laughter, and made her tell them again and again how it was done, each time renewing their applause over the cute way in which she imitated Tom's act. Then they all insisted on being formally introduced. So Nancy Pansy was stood upon the table, and the men came by in line, one by one, and were presented to her. It was a regular levee.

Presently she said she must go home, so she was taken down; but before she was allowed to leave, she was invited to go through the camp, each man insisting that she should visit his tent. She made, therefore, a complete tour, and in every tent some souvenir was pressed upon her, or she was begged to take her choice of its contents. Thus, before she had gone far, she had her arms full of things, and a string of men were following her bearing the articles she had honored them by accepting. There were little looking-glasses, pin-cushions, pairs of scissors, pictures, razors, bits of gold lace, cigar-holders, scarf-pins, and many other things.

When she left camp she was quite piled up with things, while Tom Adams, who acted as her escort, marched behind her with a large basketful besides. She did not have room to take Harry, so she left her behind, on the assurance of Tom that she should be mended, and on the engagement of the entire company to take care of her. The soldiers followed her to the edge of the camp, and exacted from her a promise to come again next day, which she agreed to do if her mother would let her. And when she was out of sight, the whole command held a council of war over the fragments of Harry.

When Adams reached Judge Seddon's gate he made a negro who was passing take the basket in, thinking it better not to go himself up to the house. He said good-by, and Nancy Pansy started up the walk, while he waited at the gate. Suddenly she turned and came back.

“Good-by!” she said, standing on tiptoe, and putting up her little face to be kissed.

The young officer stooped over the gate and kissed her.

“Good-by! Come again to-morrow.”

“Yes, if mamma will let me.” And she tripped away with her armful of presents.

Tom Adams remained leaning on the gate. He was thinking of his home far away. Sud-

denly he was aroused by hearing the astonished exclamations in the house as Nancy Pansy entered. He felt sure that they were insisting that the things should be sent back, and fearing that he might be seen, he left the spot and went slowly back to camp, where he found the soldiers still in a state of pleasurable excitement over Nancy Pansy's visit. A collection was taken up for a purpose which appeared to interest everybody, and a cap nearly full of money was delivered to Tom Adams, with as many directions as to what he was to do with it as though it were to get a memorial for the commander-in-chief. Tom said he had already determined to do the very same thing himself; still, if the company wished to "go in" with him, they could do it; so he agreed to take the money.

After this the Baby Veterans, as Tom's command was nicknamed, and Middleburgh came to understand each other a good deal better than before. Instead of remaining in their camp or marching up and down the streets, with arrogance or defiance stamped on every face and speaking from every figure, the Baby Veterans took to loafing about town in off-duty hours, hanging over the gates, or sauntering in the autumn twilight up and down the quiet walks. They and Middleburgh still recognized that there was a broad ground on which neither could trespass.

The Baby Veterans still sang “The Star-spangled Banner” in the Court-house Grove, and Middleburgh still sang “Dixie” and the “Bonnie Blue Flag” behind her rose trellises; but the rigid investment of the town relaxed a little as the autumn changed into winter, for Nancy Pansy’s pretty sister used to get letters from Harry, who was now a major. Nancy Pansy heard whispers of Harry’s coming before long, and even of the whole army’s coming. Somehow a rumor of this must have reached the authorities, though Nancy Pansy never breathed a word of it; for an officer was sent to investigate the matter and report immediately.

Just as he arrived he received secret word from some one that a rebel officer was actually in Middleburgh.

That afternoon Nancy Pansy was playing in the bottom of the yard when a lot of soldiers came along the street, and before them rode a strange, cross-looking man with a beard. Tom Adams was marching with the soldiers, and he did not look at all pleased. They stopped at the old doctor’s gate, and the strange man trotted up to her place and asked Nancy Pansy if she knew Captain Harry Hunter.

“Yes, indeed,” said Nancy Pansy, going up to the fence and poking her little rosy face over it; “Harry’s a major now.”

"Ah, Harry's a major now, is he?" said the strange man.

Nancy Pansy went on to tell him how her Harry was named after the other Harry, and how she was all broken now; but the officer was intent on something else.

"Where is Harry now?" he asked her.

"In the house," and she waved her hand toward the old doctor's house behind her.

"So, so," said the officer, and went back to Tom Adams, who looked annoyed, and said:

"I don't believe it; there's some mistake."

At this the strange man got angry, and said: "Lieutenant Adams, if you don't want the rebel caught, you can go back to camp."

My, how angry Tom was! His face got perfectly white, and he said: "Major Black, you are my superior, or you wouldn't dare to speak so to me. I have nothing to say now, but some day I'll outrank you."

Nancy Pansy did not know what they were talking about, but she did not like the strange man at all; so when he asked her, "Won't you show me where Harry is?" at first she said "No," and then "Yes, if you won't hurt him."

"No, indeed," said the man.

As Tom Adams was there she was not afraid; so she went outside the gate and on into the old doctor's yard, followed by the soldiers and Tom

Adams, who still looked angry, and told her she'd better run home. Some of the soldiers went around behind the house.

"Where is he?" the strange gentleman asked.

"Asleep upstairs in the company-room," said Nancy Pansy in a whisper. "You mustn't make any noise."

She opened the door, and they entered the house, Nancy Pansy on tiptoe and the others stepping softly. She was surprised to see the strange man draw a pistol; but she was used to seeing pistols, so, though Tom Adams told her again to run home, she stayed there.

"Which is the company-room?" asked the strange man.

She pointed to the door at the head of the steps. "That's it."

He turned to the soldiers.

"Come ahead, men," he said in a low voice, and ran lightly up the stairs, looking very fierce. When he reached the door he seized the knob and dashed into the room.

Then Nancy Pansy heard him say some naughty words, and she ran up the stairs to see what was the matter.

They were all standing around the big bed on which she had laid Harry an hour before, with her head on a pillow; but a jerk of the counter-

pane had thrown Harry over on her face, and her broken neck and ear looked very bad.

"Oh, you've waked her up!" cried Nancy Pansy, rushing forward and turning the doll over.

The strange man stamped out of the room, looking perfectly furious, and the soldiers all laughed. Tom Adams looked pleased.

II

One morning all Middleburgh was astonished by the news that old Dr. Hunter had been arrested in the night by the soldiers who had come down from Washington, and had been carried off somewhere. There had not been such excitement since the Middleburgh Artillery had marched away to the war. The old doctor was sacred. Why, to carry him off, and stop his old buggy rattling about the streets, was, in Middleburgh's eyes, like stopping the chariot of the sun, or turning the stars out of their courses. "Why did they not arrest Nancy Pansy too?" asked Middleburgh. Nancy Pansy cried all day, and many times after, whenever she thought about it. She went to Tom Adams's camp and begged him to bring her old doctor back; and Tom Adams said as he had not had him arrested he could not tell what he could do, but he would do all he could.

Then she wrote the old doctor a letter. However, all Middleburgh would not accept Tom Adams's statement as Nancy Pansy did, and instead of holding him as a favorite, it used to speak of him as “That Tom Adams.” Every old woman in Middleburgh declared she was worse than she had been in ten years, and old Mrs. Hippin took to her crutch, which she had not used in twelve months, and told Nancy Pansy's sister she would die in a week unless she could hear the old doctor's buggy rattle again. But when the fever broke out in the little low houses down on the river, things began to look very serious. The surgeon from the camp went to see the patients, but they died, and more were taken ill. When a number of other cases occurred in the town itself, all of the most malignant type, the surgeon admitted that it was a form of fever with which he was not familiar. There had never been such an epidemic in Middleburgh before, and Middleburgh said that it was all due to the old doctor's absence.

One day Nancy Pansy went to the camp to ask about the old doctor, and saw a man sitting astride of a fence rail which was laid on two posts high up from the ground. He had a stone tied to each foot, and he was groaning. She looked up at him, and saw that it was the man who had broken her doll. She was about to run away, but

he groaned so, she thought he must be in great pain, and that always hurt her; so she went closer, and asked him what was the matter. She did not understand just what he said, but it was something about the weight on his feet; so she first tried to untie the strings which held the stones, and then, as there was a barrel standing by, she pushed at it until she got it up close under him, and told him to rest his feet on that, while she ran home and asked her mamma to lend her her scissors. In pushing the barrel she broke Harry's head in pieces; but she was so busy she did not mind it then. Just as she got the barrel in place some one called her, and, turning around, she saw a sentinel. He told her to go away, and he kicked the barrel from under the man and let the stones drop down and jerk his ankles again. Nancy Pansy began to cry, and ran off up to Tom Adams's tent and told him all about it, and how the poor man was groaning. Tom Adams tried to explain that this man had got drunk, and that he was a bad man, and was the same one who had broken her doll. It had no effect. "Oh, but it hurts him so bad!" said Nancy Pansy, and she cried until Tom Adams called a man and told him he might go and let O'Meara down, and tell him that the little girl had begged him off this time. Nancy Pansy, however, ran herself, and called to him that Tom Adams said he might

get down. When he was on the ground, he walked up to her, and said:

"May the Holy Virgin kape you! Griff O'Meara'll never forgit you."

A few days after that Nancy Pansy complained of headache, and her mother kept her in the house. That evening her face was flushed, and she had a fever; so her mother put her to bed and sat by her. She went to sleep, but waked in the night, talking very fast. She had a burning fever, and was quite out of her head. Mrs. Seddon sent for the surgeon next morning, and he came and stayed some time. When he returned to camp he went to Tom Adams's tent. He looked so grave as he came in that Adams asked quickly:

"Any fresh cases?"

"Not in camp." He sat down.

"Where?"

"That little girl—Nancy Pansy."

Tom Adams's face turned whiter than it had ever turned in battle.

"Is she ill?"

"Desperately."

Tom Adams sprang to his feet.

"How long—how long can she hold out?" he asked, in a broken voice.

"Twenty-four hours, perhaps," said the surgeon.

Tom Adams put on his cap and left the tent.

Five minutes later he was in the hall at the Judge's. Just as he entered, Nancy Pansy's sister came quickly out of a door. She had been crying.

"How is she? I have just this instant heard of it," said Tom, with real grief in his voice.

She put her handkerchief to her eyes.

"So ill," she sobbed.

"Can I see her?" asked Tom gently.

"Yes; it won't hurt her."

When Tom Adams entered the room he was so shocked that he stopped still. Mrs. Seddon bent over the bed with her face pale and worn, and in the bed lay Nancy Pansy, so changed that Tom Adams never would have known her. She had fallen off so in that short time that he would not have recognized her. Her face was perfectly white, except two bright red spots on her cheeks. She was drawing short, quick breaths, and was talking very fast all the time. No one could understand just what she was saying, but a good deal of it was about Harry and the old doctor. Tom bent over her, but she did not know him; she just went on talking faster than ever.

"Nancy Pansy, don't you know Tom Adams?" her mother asked her, in a soothing voice. She had never called the young man so before, and he felt that it gave him a place with Nancy Pansy.

But the child did not know him; she said something about not having any Harry.

"She is growing weaker," said her mother.

Tom Adams leaned over and kissed the child, and left the room.

As he came down the steps he met Griff O'Meara, who asked how the "little gurl" was, "bless her soul!" When he told him, Griff turned away and wiped his eyes with the back of his hand. Tom Adams told him to stay there and act as guard, which Griff vowed he'd do if the "howl ribel army kem."

Ten minutes later Tom galloped out of camp with a paper in his pocket signed by the surgeon. In an hour he had covered the twelve miles of mud which lay between Middleburgh and the nearest telegraph station, and was sending a message to General —, his commander. At last an answer came. Tom Adams read it.

"Tell him it is a matter of life and death," he said to the operator. "Tell him there is no one else who understands it and can check it, and tell him it must be done before the afternoon train leaves, or it will be too late. Here, I'll write it out." And he did so, putting all his eloquence into the despatch.

Late that night two men galloped through the mud and slush in the direction of Middleburgh. The younger one had a large box before him on

his horse; the other was quite an old man. Picket after picket was passed with a word spoken by the younger man, and they galloped on. At last they stopped at the Judge's gate, and sprang from their splashed and smoking horses.

As they hurried up the walk, the guard at the steps challenged them in a rich Irish brogue.

"It's I, O'Meara. You here still? How is she?"

"Most in the Holy Virgin's arms," said the Irishman.

"Is she alive?" asked both men.

"It's a docther can tell that," said the sentinel. "They thought her gone an hour ago. There's several in there," he said to his captain. "I didn't let 'em in at firrst, but the young leddy said they wuz the frien's of the little gurl, an' I let 'em by a bit."

A minute later the old man entered the sick-room, while Tom Adams stopped at the door outside. There was a general cry, as he entered, "Oh, doctor!"

And Mrs. Seddon called him: "Quick, quick, doctor! she's dying!"

"She's dead," said one of the ladies who stood by.

The old doctor bent over the little still white form, and his countenance fell. She was not breathing. With one hand he picked up her little

white arm and felt for the pulse; with the other he took a small case from his pocket. “Brandy,” he said. It was quickly handed him. He poured some into a little syringe, and stuck it into Nancy Pansy’s arm, by turns holding her wrist and feeling over her heart.

Presently he said quietly, “She’s living,” and both Mrs. Seddon and Nancy Pansy’s sister said, “Thank God!”

All night long the old doctor worked over Nancy Pansy. Just before dawn he said to Mrs. Seddon, “What day is this?”

“Christmas morning,” said Mrs. Seddon.

“Well, madam, I hope God has answered your prayers, and given your babe back to you; I hope the crisis is passed. Have you hung up her stocking?”

“No,” said Nancy Pansy’s mother. “She was so—” She could not say anything more. Presently she added, “She was all the time talking about you and Harry.”

The old doctor rose and went out of the room. It was about dawn. He left the house and went over to his own home. There after some difficulty, he got in, and went to his office. His old secretary had been opened and papers taken out, but the old man did not seem to mind it. Pulling the secretary out from the wall, he touched a secret spring. It did not work at first, but after

a while it moved, and he put his hand under it and pulled out a secret drawer. In it were a number of small parcels carefully tied up with pieces of ribbon, which were now quite faded, and from one peeped a curl of soft brown hair, like that of a little girl. The old doctor laid his fingers softly on it, and his old face wore a gentle look. The largest bundle was wrapped in oil-silk. This he took out and carefully unwrapped. Inside was yet another wrapping of tissue paper. He put the bundle, with a sigh, into his overcoat pocket, and went slowly back to the Judge's. Nancy Pansy was still sleeping quietly.

The old doctor asked for a stocking, and it was brought him. He took the bundle from his pocket, and, unwrapping it, held it up. It was a beautiful doll, with yellow hair done up with little tucking combs such as ladies used to wear, and with a lovely little old tiny-flowered silk dress.

“She is thirty years old, madam,” he said gently to Mrs. Seddon, as he slipped the doll into the stocking and hung it on the bed-post. “I have kept her for thirty years, thinking I could never give it to any one; but last night I knew I loved Nancy Pansy enough to give it to her.” He leaned over and felt her pulse. “She is sleeping well,” he said.

Just then the door opened, and in tripped Tom

Adams, followed by Griff O'Meara in his stocking feet, bearing a large baby-house fitted up like a perfect palace, with every room carpeted and furnished, and with a splendid doll sitting on a balcony.

"A Christmas gift to that blessed angel, from the Baby Veterans, mem," he said, as he set it down; and then taking from his bulging pocket a large red-cheeked doll in a green frock, he placed it in the door of the house, saying, with great pride: "An' this from Griff O'Meara. Heaven bless her swate sowl!"

Just then Nancy Pansy stirred, and opened her eyes. Her mother bent over her, and she smiled faintly. Mrs. Seddon slipped down on her knees.

"Where's my old doctor, and my dolly?" she said; and then, presently, "Where's Harry, and Tom Adams?"

THE CHRISTMAS PEACE

I

GENERAL HAMPDEN and Colonel Drayton were old men—and enemies. They had been enemies for many years. Their fathers and grandfathers had been enemies. Indeed, a feud, dating from the settlement in colonial days of adjoining plantations, had existed between the Hampdens and the Draytons.

As boys, General Hampden and Colonel Drayton had been fast friends. Born in the same month, they played together and went to school together; at college they were inseparable companions. It looked for a time as though the long-standing feud between the families might be ended.

But troubles and misunderstandings arose. There was a lawsuit over a boundary line between the plantations, which Colonel Drayton lost. There was rivalry for the hand of the prettiest girl in all the region, which Colonel Drayton won. There was difference of opinion and a bitter controversy over slavery and secession.

General Hampden had an only son, Oliver. Colonel Drayton had an only daughter, Lucy. Oliver and Lucy, unmindful of the family feud, fell in love with each other. With difficulty Oliver had obtained his father's consent to ask Colonel Drayton for his daughter in marriage. The Colonel refused the young man's request, although he could not prevent his daughter pledging herself to marry no one else.

When Oliver told his father of the failure of his suit, General Hampden's rage knew no bounds. He threatened to ride straight to Drayton's house and horsewhip him on the spot.

"I hope you are satisfied," he said sternly. "I make but one request of you: that from this time forth you will never mention the name of Drayton to me again as long as you live."

The Civil War had broken out, and General Hampden and his son were among the first to enlist. Colonel Drayton, though opposed to secession, volunteered after his State had seceded. His daughter went to the army hospitals as nurse.

Young Hampden, who had risen to the rank of captain, was dangerously wounded. By chance he fell to the care of Lucy Drayton, who nursed him back to life. When he had sufficiently recovered they were married, Lucy having first obtained her father's consent. But Oliver, remembering his father's bitterness, did not inform him

of his proposed marriage. In this he made a mistake, for his father was mortally offended.

Still an invalid, Oliver Hampden went South with his bride. There he died suddenly, too suddenly for his wife to warn the father. She wrote to General Hampden, however, informing him of his son's death, but by some evil chance the letter never reached its destination; and it was some weeks later when, by accident, the General learned of Oliver's death.

This was a terrible blow to him, for he had just decided to make friends with his son. He naturally blamed the young wife that he was not informed of Oliver's illness and death.

Thus it happened that when her son was born, Lucy Hampden made no announcement of his birth to the General, and he remained in ignorance of it.

When the war closed, General Hampden, soured and embittered by his domestic troubles, devoted all his energies to building up a new fortune. In this he was very successful. Colonel Drayton, however, never practical, was unable to adapt himself to the changed conditions. Whatever he attempted, failed. At last his plantation, heavily mortgaged, had to be sold. General Hampden bought it.

Colonel Drayton went South to live with his daughter, who was supporting herself and child

by teaching. The Colonel and his grandchild became most intimate companions.

Meantime General Hampden's health gave way. His doctor ordered him to take a rest—to go South for the winter.

The General thought over the doctor's advice and finally followed it, though not for the reason the physician supposed.

Something led him to select the place where his son had gone, and where his body lay amid the magnolias. If he was going to die, he would carry out a plan which he had formed in the lonely hours when he lay awake between the strokes of the clock. He would go and see that his son's grave was cared for, and, if he could, would bring him back home at last. Doubtless "that woman's" consent could be bought. She had possibly married again. He hoped she had.

II

Christmas is always the saddest of seasons to a lonely man, and General Hampden, when he landed in that old Southern town on the afternoon of Christmas Eve, would not have been lonelier in a desert. The signs of Christmas preparation and the sounds of Christmas cheer but made him lonelier.

As soon as the old fellow had got settled in his room at the hotel he paid a visit to his son's grave, piloted to the cemetery by a friendly and garrulous old negro hackman, who talked much about Christmas and "the holidays."

"Yes, suh, dat he had known Cap'n Ham'n. He used to drive him out long as he could drive out. He had been at his funeral. He knew Mrs. Ham'n, too. She sutney is a fine lady," he wound up in sincere eulogy.

The General gave a grunt.

He was nearer to his son than he had ever been since the day he last saw him in all the pride and beauty of a gallant young soldier.

The grave, at least, was not neglected. It was marked by a modest cross, on which were the Hampden coat-of-arms and the motto "*Loyal*," and it was banked in fresh evergreens, and some flowers had been placed on it only that afternoon. It set the General to thinking.

When he returned to his hotel he found the loneliness unbearable. His visit to his son's grave had opened the old wound and awakened all his memories. He knew now that he had ruined his life. He had no care to live longer. He would return to work, and die in harness.

He sent his servant to the office and arranged for his car to be put on the first train next morning. Then, to escape from his thoughts, he

strolled out in the street, where the shopping crowds streamed along, old and young, poor and well-to-do, their arms full of bundles, their faces eager, and their eyes alight.

General Hampden seemed to himself to be walking among ghosts. As he stalked on, bitter and lonely, he was suddenly run into by a very little boy, in whose small arms was so big a bundle that he could scarcely see over it. The shock of the collision knocked the little fellow down, sitting flat on the pavement, still clutching his bundle. But his face, after the first shadow of surprise, lit up again.

"I beg your pardon, sir; that was my fault," he said, with so quaint an imitation of an old person that the General could not help smiling. With a cheery laugh he tried to rise to his feet, but the bundle was too heavy, and he would not let it go.

The General bent over him, and, with an apology, set him on his feet. "I beg *your* pardon, sir. That was *my* fault. That is a pretty big bundle you have."

"Yes, sir; and, I tell you, it is pretty heavy, too," the manikin said proudly. "It's a Christmas gift."

He started on, and the General turned with him.

"A Christmas gift! It must be a fine one.

Who gave it to you?" demanded the General, with a smile at the little fellow's confidence.

"It *is* a fine one! Didn't anybody give it to me. We're giving it to somebody."

"Oh, you are! To whom?"

"I'll tell you, but you must promise not to tell."

"I promise I will not tell a soul. I cross my heart." He made a sign, as he remembered he used to do in his boyhood.

The boy looked up at him doubtfully with a shade of disapproval.

"My grandfather says that you must not cross your heart; 't a gentleman's word is enough," he said quaintly.

"Oh, he does? Well, I give my word."

"Well—" He glanced around to see that no one was listening, and sidling a little nearer, lowered his voice: "It's a great-coat for grandfather!"

"A great-coat! That's famous!" exclaimed the General.

"Yes, isn't it? You see, he's mighty old, and he's got a bad cough—he caught it in the army—and I have to take care of him. Don't you think that's right?"

"Of course I do," said the General, envying one grandfather.

"That's what I tell him. So mamma and I have bought this for him."

"He must be a proud grandfather," said the General, with envy biting deeper at his heart.

"I have another grandfather, but I don't like *him*," continued the little fellow.

"I am sorry for that," said the General sincerely. "Why is that?"

"He was mean to my father, and he is mean to my mother." His voice conveyed a sudden bitterness.

"Oh!"

"Mamma says I must like him; but I do not. I just can't. You would not like a man who was mean to your mother, would you?"

"I would not," declared the General truthfully.

"And I am not going to like him," asserted the boy with firmness.

The General suddenly pitied one grandfather.

They had come to a well-lighted corner, and as the boy lifted his face, the light fell on it. Something about the bright, sturdy countenance, with its frank, dark eyes and brown hair, suddenly sent the General back thirty years to a strip of meadow on which two children were playing, one a dark-eyed boy as sturdy as this one. It was like an arrow in his heart. With a gasp he

came back to the present. His thoughts pursued him even here.

"What is your name?" he asked, as he was feeling in his pocket for a coin.

"Oliver Drayton Hampden, sir."

The words were perfectly clear.

The General's heart stopped beating, and then gave a bound. The skies suddenly opened for him, and then shut up again.

His exclamation brought the child to a stop, and he glanced up at him in vague wonder. The General stooped and gazed at him searchingly, almost fiercely. The next second he had pounced upon him and lifted him in his arms, while the bundle fell to the pavement.

"My boy, I am your grandfather!" he cried, kissing him violently. "I am your grandfather Hampden."

The child was lost in amazement for a moment, and then, putting his hands against the General's face, he pushed him slowly away.

"Put me down, please," he said, with that gravity which in a child means so much.

General Hampden set him down on the pavement. The boy looked at him searchingly for a second, and then turned in silence and lifted his bundle. The General's face wore a puzzled look; he had solved many problems, but he had never had one more difficult than this. His heart

yearned toward the child, and he knew that on his own wisdom at that moment might depend his future happiness, that on his next words might hang for him life or death. The expression on the boy's face, and the very set of his little back as he sturdily tugged at his burden, recalled his father, and with it the General recognized the obstinacy which he knew lurked in the Hampden blood, which had once been his pride.

"Oliver," he said gravely, leaning down over the boy and putting his hand on him gently, "there has been a great mistake. I am going home with you to your mother and tell her so. I want to see her, and your grandfather, and I think I can explain everything."

The child turned and gazed at him seriously, and then his face relaxed. He recognized his deep sincerity.

"All right." He turned and walked down the street, bending under his burden. The General offered to carry it for him, but he declined.

"I can carry it," was the only answer he made, except once, when, as the General rather insisted, he said firmly, "I want to carry it myself," and tottered on.

A silence fell on them for a moment. A young man passing them spoke to the child cheerily.

"Halloo, Oliver! A Christmas present?—

That's a great boy," he said in sheer friendliness to the General, and passed on. The boy was evidently well known.

Oliver nodded; then, feeling that some civility was due on his part to his companion, he said briefly, "That's a friend of mine."

"Evidently."

The General, even in his perplexity, smiled at the quaint way the child imitated the manners of older men.

Just then they came to a little gate, and the boy's manner changed.

"If you will wait, I will run around and put my bundle down. I am afraid my grandfather might see it." He lowered his voice for the first time since the General had introduced himself. Then he disappeared around the house.

Oliver, having slipped in at the back door and carefully reconnoitred the premises, tripped upstairs with his bundle to his mother's room. He was so excited over his present that he failed to observe her confusion at his sudden entrance, or her hasty hiding away of something on which she was working. Colonel Drayton was not the only member of that household that Christmas who was to receive a great-coat.

When Oliver had untied his bundle, nothing would serve but he must put on the coat to show his mother how his grandfather would look in it.

As even with the sleeves rolled up, and with his arms held out to keep it from falling off him, the tails dragged for some distance on the floor, and only the top of his head was visible above the collar, the resemblance was possibly not wholly exact. But it appeared to satisfy the boy. He was showing how his grandfather walked, when he suddenly recalled his new acquaintance.

"I met my other grandfather on the street, mamma, and he came home with me." He spoke quite naturally.

"Met your other grandfather!" Mrs. Hampden looked mystified.

"He says he is my grandfather, and he looks like papa. I reckon he's my other grandfather. He ran against me in the street and knocked me down, and then came home with me."

"Came home with you!" repeated Mrs. Hampden, still in a maze, and with a vague trouble dawning in her face.

"Yes'm."

Oliver went over the meeting again.

His mother's face meantime showed the tumult of emotion that was sweeping over her. Why had General Hampden come? What had he come for? To try and take her boy from her?

At the thought, her face and form took on something of the lioness that guards her whelp. Then, as the little boy repeated what his grand-

father had said of his reason for coming home with him, her face softened again.

"Oliver," she said, "you must go down and let him in. Say I will come down."

"I will not like him," said the child, his eyes on her face.

"Oh, yes, you must; he is your grandfather."

"You do not love him, and I will not." The sturdy little figure, and the serious face with the chin already firm for such a child, the dark, grave eyes, and the determined speech, were so like his father that the widow gave half a cry.

"You must, my son, and I will try. Your father would wish it."

The little boy pondered for a second.

"Very well, mamma; but he must be good to you."

As the little fellow left the room the widow threw herself on her knees.

III

As General Hampden stood and waited in the dusk, he felt that his whole life and future depended on the issue of the next few moments. He determined to take matters in his own hand. Every moment might tell against him, and might decide his fate. So, without waiting longer, he

rang the bell. A minute later he heard steps within, and the door was opened by one who he knew must be Colonel Drayton, though had he met him elsewhere he should not have recognized the white hair and the thin, bent form as that of his old friend and enemy. Colonel Drayton had evidently not seen his grandson yet, for he spoke as to a stranger.

"Will you not walk in, sir?" he said cordially. "I was expecting my little grandson, who went out a short while ago." He peered up the street. "Did you wish to see my daughter? You will find us in a little confusion. Christmas time is always a busy season with us on account of our young man, my grandson." He lingered with pride over the words.

The General stepped into the light.

"Wilmer Drayton, don't you know me? I am Oliver Hampden, and I have come to apologize to you for all I have done which has offended you, and to ask you to be friends with me." He held out his hand.

The old Colonel stepped back, and under the shock of surprise paused for a moment.

"Oliver Hampden!" The next moment he stepped forward and took his hand.

"Come in, Oliver," he said gently, and putting his other arm around the General's shoulder, he handed him into the little cosey, fire-lighted room,

as though nothing had happened since he had done the same the last time fifty years before.

At this moment the door opened, and the little boy entered with mingled mysteriousness and importance. Seeing the two gentlemen standing together, he paused with a mystified look in his wide-open eyes, trying to comprehend the situation.

"Oliver, come here," said the Colonel quietly.
"This is your other grandfather."

The boy came forward, and wheeling, stood close beside the Colonel, facing General Hampden, like a soldier dressing by his file-closer.

"*You* are my grandfather," he said, glancing up at the Colonel.

The Colonel's eyes glowed with a soft light.
"Yes, my boy; and so is he. We are friends again, and you must love him—just as you do me."

"I will not love him as much," was the sturdy answer.

It was the General who spoke next. "That is right, my boy. All I ask is that you will love me some." He was pleading with this young commissioner.

"I will, if you are good to my mother." His eyes were fastened on him without a tremor, and the General's deep-set eyes began to glow with hope.

"That's a bargain," he said, holding out his hand. The boy took it gravely.

Just then the door opened, and Lucy Hampden entered. Her face was calm and her form was straight. Her eyes, deep and burning, showed that she was prepared either for peace or war. It was well for the General that he had chosen peace. Better otherwise had he charged once more the deadliest battle line he had ever faced.

With a woman's instinct the young widow comprehended at the first glance what had taken place, and although her face was white, her eyes softened as she advanced. The General had turned and faced her. He could not utter a word, but the boy sprang toward her, and wheeling, stood by her side. Taking his hand, she led him forward.

"Oliver," she said gently, "this is your father's father." Then to the General, in a dead silence, "Father, this is your son's son."

The General clasped them both in his arms.

"Forgive me! Forgive me! I have prayed for *his* forgiveness, for I can never forgive myself."

"He forgave you," said the widow simply.

IV

No young king was ever put to bed with more ceremony or more devotion than was that little boy that night. Two old gentlemen were his grooms of the bedchamber and saw him to bed together.

The talk was all of Christmas, and the General envied the ease with which the other grandfather carried on the conversation. But when the boy, having kissed his grandfather, said of his own accord, "Now I must kiss my *other* grandfather," he envied no man on earth.

The next morning when Oliver Hampden, before the first peep of light, waked in his little bed, which stood at the foot of his grandfather's bed in the tiny room which they occupied together, and standing up, peeped over the foot-board to catch his grandfather "Christmas gift," he was surprised to find that the bed was empty and undisturbed. Then, having tiptoed in and caught his mother, he stole down the stairs and softly opened the sitting-room door, where he heard the murmur of voices. The fire was burning dim, and on either side sat the two old gentlemen in their easy chairs, talking amicably and earnestly as they had been talking when he kissed them "good-night." Neither one had made the sug-

gestion that it was bedtime; but when at the first break of day the rosy boy in his night-clothes burst in upon them with his shout of "Christmas gift," and his ringing laughter, they both knew that the long feud was at last ended, and peace was established forever.

THE END

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